

RICE UNIVERSITY

**Criminalizing Space:
Ideological and Institutional Productions of Race, Gender,
and State-sanctioned Violence in Houston, 1948-1967**

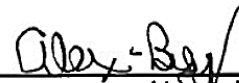
by

David Ponton III

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

Doctor of Philosophy in History

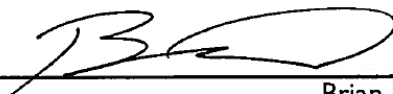
APPROVED, THESIS COMMITTEE



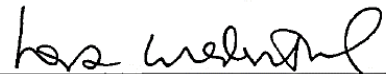
Alexander X. Byrd, Chair
Associate Professor, History



Randal Hall
Associate Professor, History
Editor, Journal of Southern History



Brian Riedel
Professor in the Practice of Humanities
Assistant Director, Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality



Lora Wildenthal
Professor of History
Associate Dean of Humanities

HOUSTON, TEXAS
March 3, 2017

ABSTRACT

Criminalizing Space: Ideological and Institutional Productions of Race, Gender, and State-sanctioned Violence in Houston, 1948-1967

by

David Ponton III

Criminalizing Space is a social history of ideas that explores various ways racial residential segregation affected the life chances of black Houstonians during the middle of the twentieth century. Jim Crow polices, custom, and living patterns marginalized black citizens from their white counterparts, negatively shaping the ways white people could relate to black people and the places they lived in. As Jim Crow slowly withered away, however, Houstonians struggled to redefine the meaning of race in ways that could be compatible with liberal individualism. Many came to rely on spatial logics. Spatial distance undergirded the social distance that stratified groups in a persistent racial hierarchy. It allowed for sustained Negrophobia, which included notions that black people were inherently predisposed or culturally conditioned to live in squalor, indulge in vice, and practice crime. For many white Houstonians, these were inherent in black spaces and justified the need for their containment through various forms of municipal neglect and abuse. Despite the efforts of black women activists, politicians, and philanthropists, the criminalization of black spaces had devastating effects on black people. It overexposed them to environmental hazards, poverty, violent crime, and police brutality. Spatial marginalization exacerbated the effects of these on black women, who faced sexual assault at the hands of police officers and employers as well as increased risks for assault and murder by their intimate partners in their own homes. And in contradistinction to its reputation as a progressive city, Houston did not relinquish Jim Crow without state-sanctioned violence. Residential segregation and so-called criminal justice were maintained as linchpins of the city's new racial order as it looked toward the end of the twentieth century.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Beholden I am to so many gracious and loving people. Dr. Alex Byrd, thank you for being *Literally* the best advisor I could have hoped for. It's quite a story, isn't it:

A high school teacher arriving at Rice University, hoping to get a doctorate but not entirely Convincing regarding what it would mean for him? Your initial belief, steadfast attention, and Kindness helped me realize a dream I didn't even know I had.

Likewise, to the remainder of my committee: Randall Hall, Lora Wildenthal, & Brian Riedel, I feel like I hit the jackpot of all things good. Each of you has been an encouraging, attentive, Vibrant participant throughout the duration of my graduate school career. Moreover, Each one of you has helped train me as a junior scholar, whether in the Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality or working at the Journal of Southern History.

Make no mistake reader, as author of this work, in many ways I am merely synecdoche for An academic community that continues to support me.

To my colleagues in history: Maria, Andrew (and Tara), Kelly, Wright, Wes— Thanks for your symbolic and material support and your generosity in offering it. Elizabeth Korver-Glenn and Junia Howell, my brilliant sociologists of housing, space, and Race: I look forward to continuing to work with y'all in perpetuity.

Friends and family understand what the reader may not: the young David Ponton who grew up in Trenton, New Jersey had no aspirations—indeed, could not fathom pursuing a life of the mind. Undoubtedly, this project is a consequence of their labors, fears, struggles, anxieties, and love as much as it is of my own. Christian, Kiara, and Najee—my nephews and niece—this dissertation is an expression of my hope for you. Kiyana, Jermaine, and Daiquan—my amazing, inspiring siblings—this project is an expression of our shared frustrations and our resilience against the suffocating forces that created the ghettos we managed to survive.

Whither that resilience? History suggests we can only know by looking backward. Indeed, my parents Sandra Marie and David Jr. are a wonder to behold. Tenacious, hard-working, loving, and protective; I hope that I am a reflection of the best in both of you. Every day I am grateful for the lessons I have learned from you: to listen before speaking, to believe in redemption, and to love beyond where it hurts.

Surely, my list of family members and friends who have made this work possible through their emotional support is endless, though I'll try to fit in as many as I can: Tilisia (who has played Words with Friends with me since I first told her I was leaving New Jersey back in 2012) and Aunt Monique and Uncle Reggie (both of whom gave me a place to lay my head on research trips). Uncle Robert, Aunt Cheryl, and Uncle Jake George, all of whom have made time for me through this process: thank you. Profusely, I give all of the heart emojis possible to my Aunt Sylvia Edwards (or, just Aunty), who always and only invokes images of love and care whenever I think of her. Representing Trenton, my friends Elizabeth Emmanuel, Shamelle Ingram, Roy Dean Johnson Jr., and Fonz Ford—y'all know how I feel about each of you. Everyone from Houston—Brandon Lewis, Richard Prather, Cecilia Oyediran, Lisa Daniels, Morgan Owens, Jaison Oliver, Meghan and David Holmes, Marie

Kunthara—thanks for being the relief I needed from my academic life, and understanding when Introvert David couldn't do much more than lay on the couch. My dear friends and colleagues from Ewing High School: Kelly and Sean Hammer, Danielle Miller, Mary Sedhom, and Alison Sipe, I treasure each of you. And of course, Dave Hurley, my supervisor in the social studies department at EHS: thanks for taking a chance on a bright-eyed college grad. Certainly, I have not forgotten my Princeton friends: Brandee Tate (who I count among the loves of my life) and Samantha Hyacinth (who brings me endless joy and sunshine). Yes, there's a hidden message in all of this.

Of course, I realize the length of these acknowledgements is getting unruly, but take it as a sign that I truly believe that this project would not be possible without the folks who have shaped me as a scholar and as a person for as far back as I can remember. So thank you: to the primary and secondary school educators who changed my world in the most profound ways: Ms. Gross (third grade), Rosemary Leonard-Bethea, Doug Larkin, and Dr. Gloria Albright; to the undergraduate and graduate professors who whet my appetite for scholarship and showed me it was okay to labor toward what mattered most to me: Drs. Sarah Jane (Saje) Mathieu, Eddie Glaude, Cornel West, Erin Cech, Susan Lurie, Michael Emerson; to fellow graduate students who have been thoughtful and critical and have provided me some of the best reprieve from academia: Dr. Meina Yates-Richard, Denise Burgher, Maco Faniel, Jermaine Thibodeaux, and Zora Hamsa; to Edwin Breeden who introduced me to Rice on my prospective visit back in 2012 and has been a helpful colleague since; to Linda Spiro, Siu Min Yu, Ms. Ann (Bazile), Ericka Goudeau-Diliberti, and Anna Shparberg—the best librarians on either side of the Mississippi; to the brilliant educators at the Princeton University Program in Teacher Preparation—Drs. Jason Klugman, Torey Wilson, Todd Kent, and the great John Webb—I'm not sure you'll ever understand what you've done for me; to the archivists who make it all possible—Joyce Thomas (TSU) and Hellenia Stokes and Ingrid Grant (Gregory School); and to Houston Arts and Media, the Center for Engaged Research and Collaborative Learning (CERCL) in partnership with the African American Library at the Gregory School in the Houston Public Library System, the Dolph Briscoe for American History, and the Texas State Historical Association for supporting my research. To the Partners of the Center of the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality (CSWGS) at Rice University: your visionary dissertation fellowship was a true gift, and I look forward to becoming a partner as well to ensure that your legacy continues to benefit other Rice graduate students. To the Rice University History Department: you are *the* best. And there was no department, for me, without Beverly Konzem, Erin Baezner, Lydia Westbrook, and Lisa Tate. Dr. Bethany Johnson of the *Journal of Southern History*—thanks for always making me feel welcome to sit in your office and interrupt your quiet days. Beyoncé, thanks for producing two phenomenal albums while I was in grad school, and Frank Ocean, thanks for writing powerful music.

Lastly, and you four should be expecting this by now: LaTasha Riddick, not a day goes by that your text messages and the sound of your voice fail to reinvigorate me; Malcolm Pyles (soon-to-be Chelliah—congratulations!), you're a friend and a brother, and geez, I'm not going to cry as I write this; Tameka Blackshir, we're star-crossed, it's true; and Michael Koch, you came along just in time, and "the laws of the world never stopped us once cause together we got plenty power (super power)."

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments.....	iii
Contents	v
List of Maps	vi
List of Figures.....	vii
List of Tables.....	viii
Introduction: A New Type of Segregation.....	I
Chapter 1: Making Black Space.....	25
Chapter 2: “We Want in, Not Out”: Envisioning a Raceless Houston.....	87
Chapter 3: God, Sex, and Dynamite: Tensions in White Houstonians’ Values and Beliefs..	160
Chapter 4: Trouble on the Bus: Making the “Negro Criminal” and Keeping Negroes in their “Place”	233
Chapter 5: Criminalized Space.....	286
Chapter 6: “A Morning of Unbelievable Horror”: The Police Siege on Texas Southern University.....	363
Conclusion.....	456
References	469

LIST OF MAPS

Map 1 Home Owners' Loan Corporation housing security map of Houston. National Archives and Record Administration.....	16
Map 2 Three tract-level maps centered on Houston's Fourth Ward neighborhood are juxtaposed to a block-level map of the same area that illustrates socioeconomic and housing diversity left illegible by tract-level data	18
Map 3 Fourth Ward Census tracts in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map	29
Map 4 Third Ward Census tracts in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map	32
Map 5 Fifth Ward Census tracts in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map	36
Map 6 Acres Homes Census tracts in 1960.....	39
Map 7 Tri-community Census tracts in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map.....	42
Map 8 Sunnyside-Chocolate Bayou Census tracts in 1960	45
Map 9 Rates of homeownership on Third Ward blocks in 1950	49
Map 10 <i>Houston Post</i> , June 12, 1955.....	51
Map 11 Racial make-up of blocks in Third Ward surrounding the Lamar Fleming Tract, labeled by average property values in 1950. The inset map shows that the Census tracts in 1960 by race and labeled with the total percent of each tract occupied by black residents. The white residents who lived on the three blocks south of the Fleming Tract left the area by the end of the decade.....	126
Map 12 Boundaries of the MacGregor-area subdivisions on a current street map of Houston.	164
Map 13 River Oaks Census tract in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map	168
Map 14 Third Ward, Washington Terrace, and Riverside Terrace labeled by the total number of non-white occupied dwelling units per block in 1950. Those small numbers of black residences outside of black Third Ward were nearly all servants' quarters until after Shelley	177
Map 15 Green Pond was a small majority-black enclave nestled between the majority-white River Oaks and Montrose communities. The residents were disproportionately employed as domestic and service workers. Despite that they had resided in the area long before many of the surrounding white families, Green Pond residents were still recognizable as “out of place” when they traversed neighboring communities.....	268
Map 16 Comparison of the quantity of crimes reported per Census tract in the <i>Informer</i> and the <i>Post</i> .292	
Map 17 Locations of incidences of violence against black women, juxtaposed first to their own homes and second to their assailant's residences in Houston	326
Map 18 The campus plan for Texas Southern University as it stood in 1967 georeferenced over an updated street map of Third Ward.	370
Map 19 Even allowing for changes in census tract boundaries, in 2010 Houston evinced starker residential segregation with more areas exhibiting higher rates of extreme segregation than in 1960.....	459

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 Population shifts in Houston's first major black residential areas.	32
Figure 2 Comparison of types and proportions of crimes reported by the Houston Police Department, the <i>Informer</i> , and the <i>Post</i>	293
Figure 3 Crimes reported by page numbers, by newspaper	299
Figure 4 Proportions of victims of crimes by sex, when reported, by newspaper.	322
Figure 5 Proportion of crimes reported in incidents involving domestic violence and street harassment against black women in the <i>Informer</i>	324
Figure 6 Proportion of black women who were victims (i.e., the party not charged) of the reported crime in instances of domestic violence or street harassment against black women in the <i>Informer</i>	324
Figure 7 Number of black women and men in each Census age group, when recorded, at the time of each incidents' reporting in the <i>Informer</i>	325

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 Demographic, socioeconomic, and housing characteristics of Houston's largest majority black Census tracts in 1960.....	47
Table 2 Victims of all crimes by racialized group, by newspaper	295
Table 3 Twenty neighborhoods with Highest Counts of Crime Reported, by Newspaper. Bolded neighborhoods are those that did not make the top 20 in the other newspaper.	296
Table 4 Black women's relationships to their assailants, when reported, in the <i>Informer</i>	325

INTRODUCTION: A NEW TYPE OF SEGREGATION

July 29, 1954. Relentless rain threatened to drown the city of Houston. The eye of Tropical Storm Barbara would never visit the growing metropolis, but its winds and water-filled clouds nevertheless tore at the Bayou City. Barbara was a “menace” and a “nuisance”—displacing over 125 families as it swept water into homes sitting too close to Hall’s, Green’s, and Little White Oak Bayous. Hundreds of other residents were evacuated throughout the rest of Harris County. As night fell, the rain continued to soak the earth beneath Houston’s feet.¹

Houston’s humid air wrapped itself around Blanche Beard on the night Barbara came to town. The forty-two-year-old white mother of one had recently taken up a job as a waitress at Leo’s Tavern to help care for her six-year-old son and her husband Orvis, who was recovering from an injury that prevented him from going to work. When she began the five minute walk to her Lawndale Street home at 10:10 that night, Mrs. Beard could not have predicted that danger lurked nearby. Her neck of the woods, the Harrisburg neighborhood on the East End of Houston, was a small town that had been annexed by the growing city in 1926. She was only a little over one hundred feet from the safety of her home.²

She could get out of her wet clothes and maybe see her little one to bed. She might tell Orvis a funny story about a drunken patron or complain about how her feet hurt. Or she might just want to take a cool shower. Either way, she would be able to sigh with relief that another dollar had been earned for the Beard family.

Until she was blindsided.

He was dark and blended in with the night so well. Johnnie Elwood Gordon had gotten off of work at nine o'clock that night, and after a jaunt downtown for a late dinner, he rode the bus to Harrisburg and by ten o'clock he was searching for a "good time" around the neighborhood. He could not seem to find the two local girls he was acquainted with, and after all of this fruitless searching for them in the rain, he decided it was time to head home. That was until he spotted her. Blanche. She was walking down Frio Street and she looked alone enough.³

He appeared to be seven feet tall. Indeed, he embodied all of the monstrous, "Negro buck" features little white girls had been taught to fear; he was powerful, insatiable, vicious, and as black as the night under the cloudy sky.⁴ The "slender young man wearing a white T-shirt" grabbed Blanche, and together she and Johnnie rolled into a ditch.⁵ She tried to let out a scream, but he grabbed her by the throat. "If you scream, you s – o – b, I will kill you," he snarled.⁶ She struggled some more, but she could not get a sound out as the ravenous Johnnie Elwood Gordon forced her throat closed and warned her again, "You scream and I'll kill you."⁷

With Blanche subdued, Johnnie reached his hand under her dress and "tore the crotch from her pants." She lost consciousness. Three times. That was the total number of times Blanche blacked out, awakening the first two times only to realize she was still under assault. While her mind escaped her body for the third time, Gordon "reached a climax and took [his] penis out of her." The entire ordeal could not have lasted for more than fifteen minutes, but before Blanche awakened to realize she had been freed from Gordon's grip, the monster had already climbed out of the ditch and began a determined sprint down Manchester Street toward a bus stop.⁸

The Census tract wherein Blanche Beard lived was overwhelmingly white. Most of the 3,764 residents (91.7 percent) looked like her, and the majority of them owned their own homes (52 percent). About two out of every three black residents there were renters and most of them (53.5 percent) were domestic and service workers. In the seven blocks near Mrs. Beard's home that stretched down Frio Street around Lawndale Avenue, 119 occupied units housed only seven non-white families. Beard's neighborhood was like most other Houston neighborhoods then: highly segregated by race. The proximity of black service workers was also typical—in many cases desirable for white families who preferred access to “the kinds of colored servility most white [people] deemed a southern tradition...” The infinitesimal black professional class nearby illustrated the other side of that reality; white Houstonians had little need for residential proximity to those middle class black folks whose labor they could not exploit, and throughout the city's history used both legal and extralegal strategies to maintain hard dividing lines between spaces that they identified as black and others they saw as their own.⁹

The news of Blanche Beard's rape, while it upset Houstonians, black and white, did not precipitate a race war or threats of lynching. The last recognized lynching with roots in Houston—the first in fifty years—had been in 1928, when seven white men took Robert Powell, a city man, from Jefferson Davis Hospital. Powell had murdered Houston detective A. W. Davis after he fled the officer during a stop-and-harass encounter. Mayor Oscar Holcombe and the wealthy elite, such as Jesse Jones, immediately condemned the lynching, and city newspapers lamented the blemish in Houston's reputation on the eve of its hosting the Democratic National Convention. Six of the men were arrested and charged with murder, though after the convention left town and Houston fell out of the national spotlight the cases against the defendants seemed to fall apart. After the trial of one defendant in the

summer of 1928 the “district attorney’s entire file of information” regarding the case went missing, “including the purported confessions of four of the defendants.” Nevertheless, the city’s initial official response to the lynching helped it present itself to the nation as progressive, even as it remained adamantly Jim Crow. Indeed, powerful Houstonians, for the sake of the city’s image and their personal business interests, as well as in response to the outcries of the city’s black leaders, convinced themselves and their neighbors that “Houston’s Jim Crow system would be enforced in the future by a larger, better organized, and better-equipped police force, not by lynch law.” As historian Bernadette Pruitt explained, though “civic leaders often exaggerated race relations in [Houston], suggesting people got along quite well, in hopes of influencing internal migration into the city,” the historical record revealed that “Houston did not shield African Americans... from racial antagonism, the threat of injury, or violence.”¹⁰

Indeed, despite its reputation otherwise, Houston did not relinquish Jim Crow without resistance. White terrorism, in the forms of physical and discursive violence, remained an ever-present danger to black residents. But by the time Johnnie Elwood Gordon faced the courts, Houstonians in the mainstream preferred to have what they called “justice” carried out by a professionalized judicial system rather than vigilante mobs. The trial itself, an interracial rape case, exposed the cultural convictions and anxieties of white Houstonians. Though there were white Houstonians who occupied the extremes concerning the future of race in the city—some advocated integration while others opposed it wholeheartedly—many residents fell somewhere in the middle. They were admittedly prejudiced toward “Negroes” because the group was “wholly without honor and morals,” but were also willing to admit that black people at least deserved the same kinds of opportunities white people received, sans “social equality.”¹¹ Their attempts at refinement

notwithstanding, even these moderate white residents seemed unable to resist their basest fears about their Negro counterparts. “Negro crime” featured prominently in white newspapers, in private letters, and in the rhetoric of segregationists as the reason they did not want to share their schools or neighborhoods with black folk. It was in these “campaign[s] to defame the Negro” by newspapers and their readers that white Houstonians exposed the root of their anxiety: segregation was essential to the demarcation of space as a way to remain property holders, even hostage takers, of white women, real estate, and social, economic, and political resources.¹²

They expressed as much in 1954, after the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Panicked Texans flooded Governor Allan Shivers’s office with letters demanding action on the issue of desegregation, suggesting measures as drastic as secession, interposition, and shutting down the state’s public school system entirely. Rarely, some letters asked the governor to soften his stance on segregation in the business and moral interests of the state. But most derided the Supreme Court’s decision and the “agitators” who had presented the case, echoing the sentiments of one letter-writer, Bessie Bizzell Mayrant of Palestine, Texas:

I know not how you will be able to help us but I appeal to you, a descendant of the kind of noble men who wrote our Constitution and revered God and who never intended the minority to rule the majority.... You cannot appease negroes. If you give him an inch, he takes a mile (sic) He is brutal and cruel and generally his I.Q. is far below that of the white race. He is not proud of his race.... The ultimate aim of the negro is not integration of society, the schools, etc., but integration of the races. He brags that “We’re reaching for the top rung[”] and we know what they mean. They are by nature thieves and liars also.... In the Houston Post, Will Kilgarlin, 5704 Capital Ave, offers this diabolical, revolting idea for forcing this nauseating, horrifying thing down the throats of us Southern people, namely: to perpetuate this shameful thing on our little ones first, just babies, entering school, because, he says, they are not prejudiced.... Just last week there was a verdict of 10 years given a negro here who had molested women and little girls in central Texas for 10 years. Of course he will be out in a few years, and God pity the white girls and women in Texas.¹³

In the minds of many white Americans, black men threatened white women's safety as well as the so-called purity of the white race. This was not merely a problem of biological reproduction, but also one of social reproduction. The rise of a "mongrel" race threatened to extend all of the wealth and privileges conferred to *white* people to *all* Americans. The former anxiety of the black male rapist, of course, was largely unfounded.¹⁴ The latter fear of losing racial purity willfully confused the actual history of interracial rape in the South: which white men were the prime perpetrators of interracial sexual violence across the region.¹⁵

For black Houstonians, sentiments like Mayrant's were insulting, certainly because they consistently configured black men as libidinous monsters, but also because of the erasure of black women from the conversation. Carter Wesley, publisher of the *Houston Informer*, a black-owned newspaper, repeatedly provided substantial ink for calling out the hypocrisy of white laypeople and representatives of the police and court system. While they claimed to be horrified by the idea of interracial sex, consensual or not, and even more disgusted by the act of rape in general, they did not extend the courtesies of "womanhood" to black citizens. Wesley wrote:

[W]hen white men violate Negro women, grand juries refuse to indict, or juries refused to convict; sometimes the courts just won't entertain the case at all. In the case of the Negro's having look at the white woman, all of the daily papers and the white leaders deplore the bestiality and depravity of the Negro race! But when a defenseless colored woman is wronged by white men, even the white women... don't speak up in favor of the colored woman, and they don't demand punishment for those who wrong her.¹⁶

Likewise, Wesley's editorial staff wrote in 1953: "Until rape is rape, and crime is crime, and justice is justice regardless of race, race relations will never be much better than they are and Houston will never be much more civilized than it is."¹⁷ Black women, then, were

denied the inclusion into the category “woman” in the eyes of a court system that privileged the voices of white people and the mythos of innate “Negro criminality.”

Like other black people standing trial in cross-racial crimes in Harris County in the 1950s, Gordon was tried before an all-white, all-male jury that did not wince when the prosecutor used the word “nigger” in the courtroom. Gloria Bradford, a member of Gordon’s defense team and the first black graduate of the University of Texas’s law school, argued that the case had no merit on multiple grounds. First, the physician who examined Blanche Beard “found no positive evidence of rape and could not find many of the alleged scars and bruises which the complaining witness stated were present.” Bradford pointed out to the court that the lack of medical evidence in the case supporting a claim of rape “was completely disregarded.” Second, she claimed that local officers had “threatened” Gordon with “bodily harm” ahead of forcing him to sign a confession. Third, the only additional witness to the attack on Blanche was a man driving his car, Bob McClendon, who testified that the assailant he saw running from the muddy ditch was “bareheaded,” but Gordon, when found at a nearby bus stop by Orvis Beard, “had on a cap.” Fourth, when it came to his identification as the rapist, Gordon believed he was fingered at the lineup by Beard because he was “the only Negro present,” and, moreover, his height, at about six feet and five inches, was not comparable to anyone else present in the row. Related, Beard indicated that on the night of the attack she could not provide any description of the man other than the fact that he was black, despite having claimed to have gotten “a good look at [him].” “The nearest street light,” Bradford noted, was “located approximately one hundred twenty-five feet” away from the place of the attack, making visibility even more difficult on that dreary night. Fifth, even Beard’s husband testified that when he found Gordon waiting at a bus stop, the black suspect’s clothes were not “wet and muddy in the fashion” of

Blanche Beard's.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the jury determined that Gordon had assaulted Blanche and recommended his death by electrocution.¹⁹

Gordon's case demonstrated the ways Houstonians wrestled with and managed the city's color line during a moment in which black Americans were actively dismantling Jim Crow's legal apparatus and in which all Americans were being compelled to reconcile the racial status quo with the values of liberal individualism.²⁰ Houstonians responded with relative calm to the allegation of interracial rape, though white residents decried Gordon as an example of black predatory criminality. Maintaining segregation meant protecting all forms of white property from degradation and depreciation, whether that property was real estate or white women themselves. But the best way to sustain Jim Crow, most white Houstonians agreed, was to mete out punishments to black people through a criminal justice system that might start with vigilantism, but which would ultimately be left to police, sheriff's deputies, and the courts.

The white supremacy of the earlier twentieth century and its tactics of mob terror became increasingly untenable in the midst of Cold War politics in Houston. However, it did not die. Rather, it adapted. In fact, after the Supreme Court decided that Jim Crow public schools were unconstitutional in 1954, Henry Allen Bullock, professor of sociology at Texas Southern University, warned black Houstonians that if they were not proactive "a new type of segregation" would undo their recent civil rights gains.²¹ One way through which this new-but-familiar racial order would manifest would be in the criminalization of neighborhood spaces stigmatized as "black." The social, economic, and political processes that helped give rise to and maintain segregation in Houston's landscape reflected the citizenry's dual commitment to liberal individualism and their tacit belief that racialized

spaces were natural to a city's social geography, as that geography reflected irreducible differences between racial groups.

“Criminalizing Space” is a social history and a history of ideas that explores various ways racial residential segregation affected the life chances of black Houstonians during the middle of the twentieth century. Jim Crow policies, custom, and living patterns marginalized black citizens from their white counterparts, negatively shaping the ways white people could relate to black people and the places they lived in. As Jim Crow slowly withered away and in the cauldron of Cold War politics, however, Houstonians struggled to redefine the meaning of race in ways that could be compatible with liberal individualism. Many came to rely on spatial logics. Spatial distance undergirded the social distance that stratified groups in a persistent racial hierarchy. It allowed for sustained Negrophobia, which included notions that black people were inherently predisposed or culturally conditioned to live in squalor, indulge in vice, and practice crime. For many white Houstonians, these were inherent in black spaces and justified the need for their containment through various forms of municipal neglect and abuse. Despite the efforts of black women activists, politicians, and philanthropists, the criminalization of black spaces had devastating effects on black people. It overexposed them to environmental hazards, poverty, violent crime, and police brutality. Spatial marginalization exacerbated the effects of these on black women, who faced sexual assault at the hands of police officers and employers as well as increased risks for assault and murder by their intimate partners in their own homes. This project takes advantage of Geographic Information Systems technology to manipulate the scale at which historians can understand how racialized space gets made and integrates spatial analysis with traditional archival materials and oral histories. It elucidates the ways white Americans stigmatized, abused, avoided, and practiced violence against “black space,” which is *not* the equivalent of

urban space, the rhetorical somersaults white supremacy practiced preceding the emergence of so-called colorblind racism, and the deleterious effects of these on ordinary people.

The dissertation consists of six chapters. Chapter I asks: what is “black space” and what was its function? It charts the history of six historically and predominantly black residential areas in Houston, three of them urban in character, one suburban, one “rurban,” and another rural. Black spaces were the physical manifestation of white people’s ideas about blackness that emerged out of white supremacist social, economic, and political action. Indeed, the very notion that a space could be black—“Negro quarters” as they were called in the 1950s—was predicated on the idea that race, a white supremacist construct, could spill out of the body and transform the nature of a space. Once solidified in Houston’s social and political geographies, black spaces operated as containers for surplus and refuse: poor people of all colors, waste dumps, and vice. Whereas urban historians often argue that these experiences in other cities reflected the ways “chocolate cities” were increasingly seen in opposition to “vanilla suburbs” in the post-War period, Houston’s growth did not commit to such a pattern. Houston demonstrates, instead, that the racialization of space, far more than the quality of the space itself, determined its value.²²

The second chapter asks how black Houstonians envisioned their city’s future given its past and present. During the 1940s and forward, black Houstonians, with increasing effort, agitated for fair housing and employment, educational and residential desegregation, and equal protection under the law in municipal and county courtrooms. They articulated varied visions of a “raceless” future for the city, where individual merit determined a person’s station in society, rather than their color or race. They put their faith in “Heavenly Houston” for its relatively calm race relations and in the cult of liberal ideology that

undergirded Cold War Americanism. But while Houston's mainstream black civil rights leaders tended to agree that the future should be raceless, they often disagreed on tactics. Although scholars tend to identify the cleavages that existed between leftist and conservative black Americans, as well as those spread on the spectrum in between, I note that even those who shared the same political perspective could be committed to oppositional civil rights projects. Disagreements between black leaders often revealed the ways that gendered self-conceptions shaped what Houstonians thought was practicable at pivotal moments in the city's burgeoning civil rights struggle.

"God, Sex, and Dynamite," the third chapter, addresses the question of how white Houstonians and white Americans more broadly responded to the increasingly forceful demands from their black counterparts that the nation respect its commitment to liberal individualism. White Americans' attitudes, ranged from interest in the possibility of desegregation, to distress at the meaning of integration for their property values, and even to rage. Some performed acts of terror both large and small, reflecting the ideological and discursive struggles of their day. Ultimately, however, with very few exceptions, white Houstonians maintained that black people deserved their lower position in society, and a return to the familiar discourse of "black criminality" served to justify their conclusions. While many scholars have credited the rise of "colorblind racism" to evolutions of racial ideology following the Second World War, focused readings of private letters, newspaper editorials, civic organization notes, and political campaign materials reveal a diversity of thought among white Americans that is not accurately captured by the term "colorblind." This chapter introduces terms that encourage a more nuanced interpretive scheme for categorizing the diversity of white thought at a moment in which Jim Crow was becoming destabilized. Namely, the Houston case demonstrates that some Americans were *color-*

rejecting and engaged in conscious efforts to complete anti-racist work with attention to historical inequality. Others were *color-evasive*, evincing conscious and subconscious efforts to maintain the notion that color (and history) did not and should not matter in correcting existing inequalities because only individuals—not groups—were of material importance in American jurisprudence. Some black folks were keenly *color-aware*, expressing a pragmatic need for minority groups to close ranks and support in-group economic upward mobility and racial uplift while espousing a consciously non-separatist, integrated vision for the future. And finally, there were the familiar *color-valuing* Americans who maintain staunch beliefs in the inherent biological, behavioral, cultural, and/or spiritual differences between racial groups. At times antagonistic and at other times complementary, these ideas shaped Houstonians' desires for the future of the city and directed their actions in the 1950s.

The second and third chapters demonstrate the overlap in liberal individualist values across white and black Houstonians. Chapter 4 asks: if liberal individualism was valued by both black and white Houstonians, who did it actually benefit in a time defined by the slow demise of Jim Crow? Were black Houstonians able to marshal liberalism in their favor, or could white supremacy and institutional racism be reconciled with so-called racelessness? On October 11, 1951, Johnnie Lee Morris, a black Houstonian married to a white woman, killed a white public bus operator, Florian Novak. Morris had acted in self-defense after Novak and a white passenger physically assaulted him for flouting the unwritten rules of racial etiquette that structured interracial interaction in the city. Tried by an all-white jury, Morris was found guilty of murder, but spared the death penalty. His attorneys and supporters touted this as a victory. Their resignation elucidated a limit of the color-rejecting vision espoused by Houston's black leaders and their white allies. Liberal individualism, far from sustaining Morris's right to self-defense, instead undergirded a justice system wherein

racial tokenism, color-evading peremptory strikes, and avoidance of explicitly racist appeals could protect the all-white prosecutorial team, the all-white courts, and the all-white jury from claims of discrimination. Cases like Morris's dot the historical record and are often acknowledged by scholars as the bittersweet victories that contemporaries recognized them as. But Morris's case, like the others, affirmed stereotypes of black criminality and systems of white supremacy in ways that encouraged white people to seek out "more segregation" for the duration of the century.²³

White Houstonians' calls for increased segregation from and punishments for black communities became part of a long list of discursive and material practices that overexposed black residents to various forms of economic exploitation, discrimination, and specific types of crime. The fifth chapter asks, how exactly did crime limit the life chances of black Houstonians in segregated communities? How did gender and sexuality interact with those constraints? Using a data mine from two city newspapers from 1950-1959, Chapter 5 maps the ways law enforcement officials and the newspapers' editors themselves devalued black lives and confirmed, for those willing to believe it, that black people were inclined to commit crimes and to endure them. While black men suffered the most criminal and state-sanctioned violence, black women and gender non-conforming people disproportionately bore the weight of all forms of violence, including verbal, sexual, and domestic abuse. The chapter uses newspapers and GIS to map the city's social geography as it would have been made legible to the reading public, and while the findings in the chapter make the case that the equation of "black spaces" with crime was unwarranted, I also argue that the press, both made the opposite case.

The final chapter explores the ways the segregation and political patterns traced throughout the 1950s continued to manifest into the late 1960s as the city trended toward

increased residential segregation, despite that nearly two decades had passed since the Supreme Court decided in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948) that racial restrictions in private deeds were no longer enforceable in the nation's courts. Houston, which had never gotten a majority of its voters to approve a racial zoning ordinance, then lost its only legal mechanism for maintaining neighborhoods as exclusively white-owned. Yet, the patterns of yesteryears persisted, and in some cases, the color line became more starkly drawn. Cities like Houston and Atlanta are often juxtaposed with places like Birmingham, Dallas, and Little Rock, as examples of how the white American business elite could guide southern metropolises through the desegregation process nonviolently.²⁴

But on May 17, 1967, the Houston Police Department emptied over two thousand gunshots into men's dormitories on the campus of Texas Southern University, following a year of non-violent civil rights activism emanating from the campus community. The assault on TSU students was an act of terrorism in the service of white supremacy, and revealed that Houston, despite its reputation otherwise, was not unlike other southern cities that failed to desegregate peacefully. Indeed, whereas much of this work attends to Houston's particularities and the ways those gave shape to local politics, the larger instructive piece is that challenges to white supremacy are always met with violence, even when it may appear otherwise.

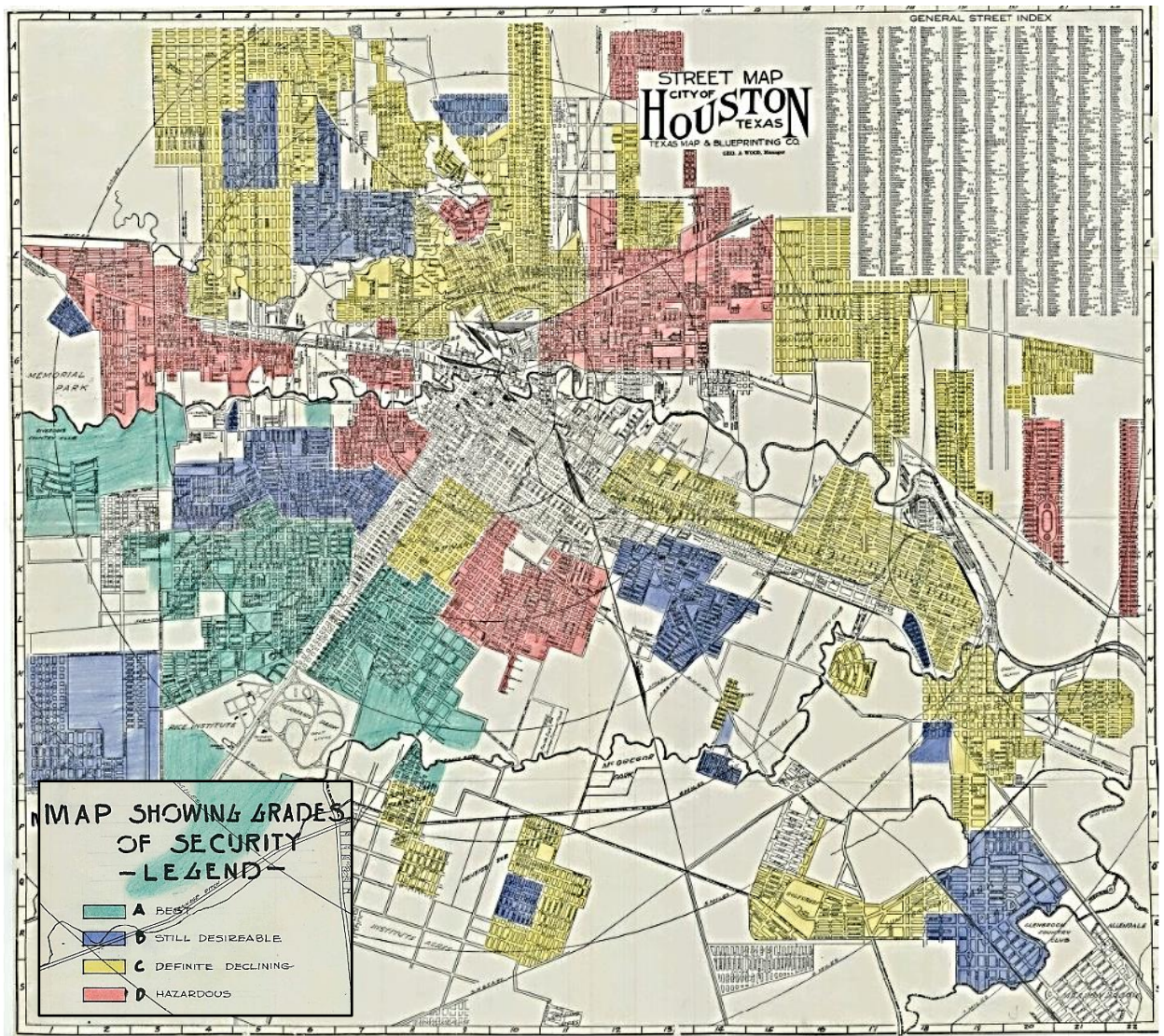
The violence at TSU represented a crisis for the city of Houston, which had for decades lauded itself as an exceptional city of racial progressivism. It highlighted the prevailing issue of residential and educational segregation and explicitly demonstrated the ways the racialization and criminalization of space could justify the continued "containment" of black people in a society where liberal individualism was coming to prevail over Jim Crowism. The attack at TSU, in addition to the practices of "slow violence" discussed

throughout *Criminalizing Space*, reveals that desegregation never proceeded without threat or brutality. In Houston, two decades of agitation by civil rights groups were met with terror. When TSU students came face-to-face with that horror in 1967, it confirmed that nineteenth-century segregation would not die without a fight, even as a new type of segregation, put in place by a federally-funded “war on crime,” became installed as Jim Crow’s successor.

Exploring these topics required the use of traditional archival resources such as newspapers, manuscript collections, and Census data. Additionally, oral histories recorded, collected, and curated by the Houston Public Library system and Houston Arts and Media (a local nonprofit) as well as interviews conducted by sociologist Gunnar Myrdal’s researchers in the 1930s help fill in gaps and make it possible to write a history that attends to the quotidian.

But many of these questions are also spatial. Thus, I have also used GIS technology toward three specific ends. First, I have provided a series of maps throughout the chapter that act as visual aids. They should help readers who are unfamiliar with Houstonian’s geography get a sense of where particular neighborhoods, streets, and points of interest were (and sometimes remain) spatially related. For example, when readers follow Anna and Clarence Dupree across racial boundaries on public conveyances when traveling from work in River Oaks back to their home in Third Ward, readers can see that their travels from east to west would have taken them through multiple but differently segregated spaces. The maps then provide a visual sketch of the ways black people like the Duprees had to endure the absurd, yet mundane racial interactions that demanded subservient courtesy from black folks occupying public spaces with white folks, as they crossed through pockets of affluence, mixed-income neighborhoods, and impoverished ones that were all racially marked. I used

both data from the 1960 U.S. Census and newspaper stories to construct these maps and to geocode (or pinpoint) noted institutions, streets, and neighborhood boundaries.

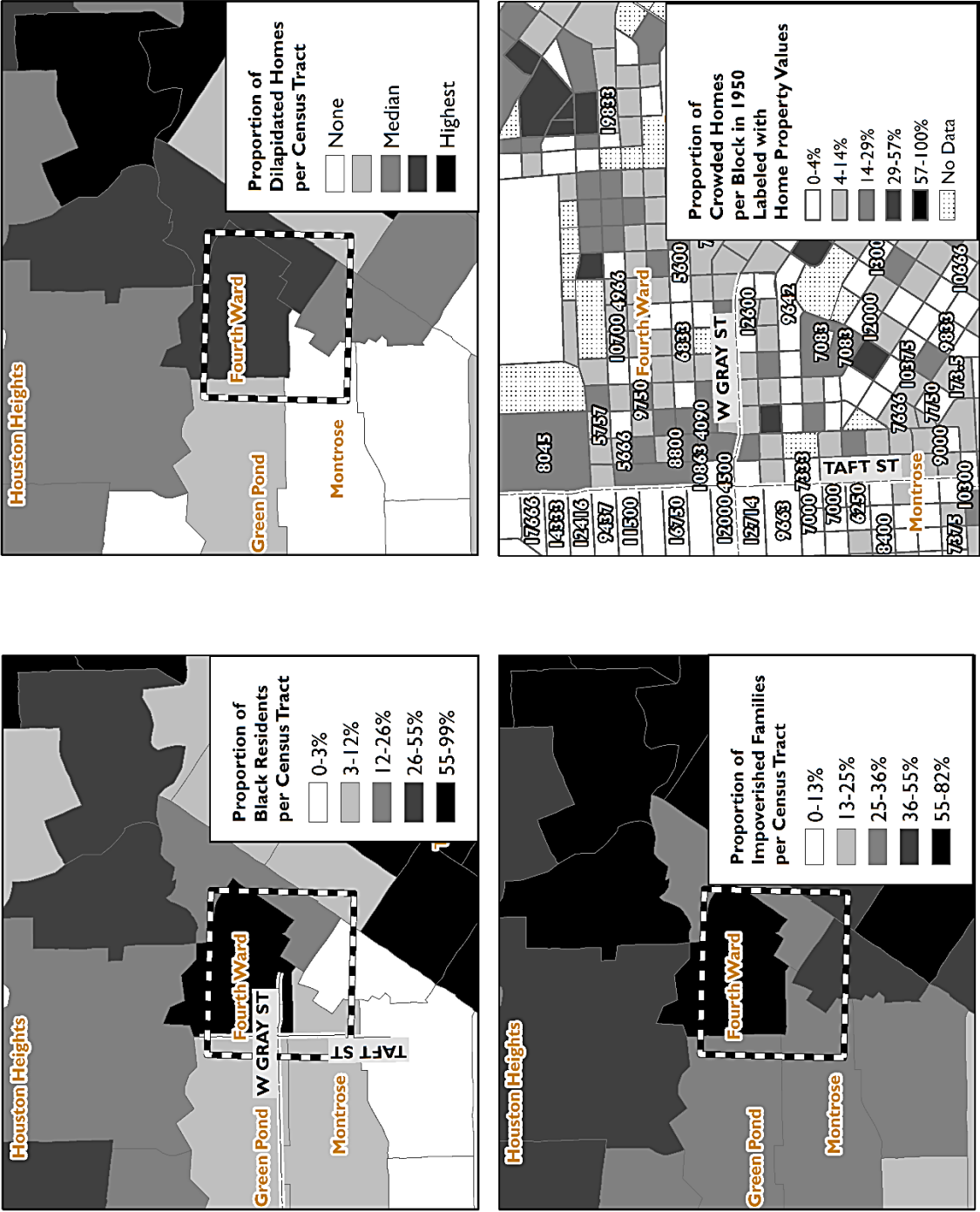


Map 1 Home Owners' Loan Corporation housing security map of Houston. National Archives and Record Administration.

Secondly, these maps work together to serve as another way to think about the relationship between residential segregation and opportunity. Produced during the Great Depression, the Home Owners' Loan Corporation's residential security map (see Map 1) will help readers to see how lenders spatialized opportunity. These "redlining" maps helped federal and private lenders determine where to make loans available to homebuyers. Juxtaposed to maps that indicate the racial make-up of neighborhoods by census tracts

thirty years later, readers can conclude that the places where black people were most likely to live (and until 1948, the places where they could own homes) were also the least likely places for building wealth through home ownership.²⁵

Thirdly, I have created and provided block-level maps of some of Houston's neighborhoods to demonstrate the heterogeneity within them. Tract-level maps suggest that black neighborhoods were wholly impoverished, undereducated, and undesirable. However, the block maps show a great deal of socioeconomic diversity within black neighborhoods and entire blocks where home values were as high as those in restricted white neighborhoods. These maps, then, illustrate what should be intuitive: if wealthy and middle class black people could not live in predominantly white communities where incomes and wealth were commensurate with their own, their neighbors would be black and situated across the entire economic spectrum. Black neighborhoods—the civic, social, and commercial spaces that black people created—were quite different, then, from “black spaces”—those areas marked as “Negro” and overexposed to white abuse, terror, and neglect.²⁶ While historians have not made great use of block-level data, perhaps because the data is not digitized and is therefore not readily available for spatial or statistical analysis, such information provides an opportunity to re-imagine the scale at which we study segregation and to see black neighborhoods in ways that would be more legible to the people who actually lived in them. For example, *Map 2* shows three statistical measures of Houston's historically black Fourth Ward near downtown. At the census tract level the neighborhood looks dilapidated and impoverished on the whole. Additional measures not pictured also place Fourth Ward as one of the most densely populated areas in the city. However, at the block level it is clear that while a disproportionate number of families suffered overcrowding in Fourth Ward, many did not. Likewise, although some residential



Map 2 Three tract-level maps centered on Houston's Fourth Ward neighborhood are juxtaposed to a block-level map of the same area that illustrates socioeconomic and housing diversity left illegible by tract-level data.

property values were among the lowest in the city, reaching only into the low \$4000 range, some real estate in Fourth Ward was just as valuable and sometimes more valuable than property in the adjacent white community of Montrose. The difference between these two spaces, then, was greater class heterogeneity in predominantly black areas, not abject decay and ubiquitous poverty. Ordinary life in these spaces, as well as the kinds of politics and organizing that came out of them, then, would be similarly diverse and complex and worthy of interrogation.²⁷

This research presents an opportunity to re-conceptualize the shifting of Houston, and the South's, racial re-ordering as Jim Crow was deconstructed. The effects of residential segregation on black Houstonians endured throughout the 1950s as black neighborhoods remained largely excluded from the appropriation of city resources, over-exposed to poverty and therefore crime, and over-policed for petty crimes. While the laws of the land changed, the social geography of the city did not, and this sense of what the city looked like—black and high crime over there, white and right over here—played a significant role in the rhetoric surrounding black criminality and justifications for abusive policing. This criminalization of blackness and black spaces grew so dire, that by the 1970s, Houston mayor Fred Hofheinz attested that, “Police brutality in black communities was the major issue and it was treated like a war zone by the police department.” He continued, saying that “the basic instinct” of the police department was “that all blacks are criminals.”²⁸ The 1950s then, the decade when policing became professionalized, was also a moment in which policing re-emerged as a mechanism for denying opportunities for group advancement in black communities as Jim Crow fell and “a new type of segregation” emerged.

Across the nation, black Americans understood, “Segregation in housing” as “one of the stubborners [sic] forms of segregation and hardest to combat.”²⁹ They resented crime in

their neighborhoods, but they also suggested, even in the case of the most heinous crimes, that their communities suffered because criminal activity was “compounded of frustrations, derangements, and various other factors that warp human personality.”³⁰ The editorialists at the *Houston Informer*, a black-owned newspaper, lamented the ways that “segregation with its limitations on freedom and opportunity” caused “ever-increasing numbers of Negroes” to leave the “rural South for the cities, both South and North,” only to precipitate the “flight of segregation-minded white [people]” and a squandering of the educational and labor potential of the black population by those cities.³¹ And, tying these themes together, a citizen wrote a letter, saying, “I keep reading from time to time that Negroes commit more murders than anybody else in Houston. Somehow I don’t believe the picture is complete if one just takes the total number of murders committed by any race. Are our poor housing, our lack of healthy and proper recreation centers, both combining to drive our people more into beer taverns?”³²

“Criminalizing Space” identifies residential segregation as a necessary component of the structure of racial inequality in Houston, critical to inequities that persisted in education, employment, health, and exposure to environmental hazard and police brutality. It illuminates the consequences of the artificial boundaries that signify “white” and “black” spaces on communities once the legal apparatus that fortified those borders were, ostensibly, removed. Effects on environment, culture, wealth, mobility, crime, and policing practices figure heavily into the story of Jim Crow Houston, as well as into the city’s biography during the dismantling of that system of racial ordering. And indeed, black Houstonians were overexposed to all these deleterious effects of segregation, including higher rates of crime. However, these reflected the fact that “crime [is] structured action” rather than a racial predisposition to criminality among black Americans. Higher crime in black communities and its correlates were

consequences rather than causes of segregation.³³ As a study of Houston, this project is an attempt to demonstrate how the biography of a particular locality illuminates the structure of living, exposure to crime, and access to opportunity with respect to race, gender, class, and sexuality. This study of Houston is a story of Jim Crow and the South, but it is also a national one. In the middle of the century Houston exemplified one of the ways a city's social and physical structure, a citizenry's desire for racialized social distance, and the limbs of the so-called criminal justice system could converge to form a powerful social organism that birthed an evolved racism and a "new type of segregation."

Notes

¹ "14 Car Mishaps in Downpour," *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, sec. C, 18; "2182 Phones Knocked out of Service," *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, sec. A, 16; "Rain-Swollen Bayous Send Families on Run," *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, sec. A, 1; "Historical Hurricane Tracks," *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration*, accessed November 8, 2013, <http://csc.noaa.gov/hurricanes>; "Some Loss, But Farms Rejuvenated," *Houston Post*, July 31, 1954, 1, 3; "Batch of Photos Shows Early Days at KPRC," *Bayou City History*, accessed November 17, 2013, <http://blog.chron.com/bayoucityhistory/2012/02/batch-of-photos-shows-early-days-at-kprc/>. The old KPRC station was located where the present-day Williams Tower and Waterwall are situated, just west of the 610 Loop. "Storm Barbara Pours More Than 2 Inches Rain on Harris County," *Houston Post*, July 30, 1954 (first quote), 10; "Flooded Bayou Menaces Oak Forest Area Homes," *Houston Post*, July 31, 1954 (second and third quotes), 12. I have told this story before and it exists in manuscript form at David Ponton III, "Disentangling Desire in 1950s Houston: On Assemblages and Racial Disparity in American Criminal Justice" December 10, 2013, <https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/75930>.

² "Police Hunt for Assailant of East End Mother, 42," *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, 1; United States Bureau of the Census, *Fifteenth Census of the United States: 1930: Population*, vol. I (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1931); *Gordon v. State*, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955). Orvis was about thirty-eight years old and a laborer in the trucking industry from Marion County, Texas. He had only completed one year of high school and Blanche had received her high school diploma. While living in Marion County, she was unemployed and seemed to remain unemployed in Houston until her husband's injury. They can be found in "1940 U.S. Federal Population Census (Enumeration District: 158-2, Sheet 7A)" April 12, 1940, <http://heritagequestonline.com>.

³ *Gordon v. State*, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955).

⁴ For an excellent study on the constructed and iterative nature of "racial etiquette," and particularly how the "black male rapist" was a constitutive part of this learning process, see Jennifer Lynn Ritterhouse, *Growing Up Jim Crow: How Black and White Southern Children Learned Race* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 36–41, 191–217. Also see Clare Eby's discussion of the ways Richard Wright captured common assumptions about black men in the character of Bigger Thomas in *Native Son*: "Slouching toward Beastliness: Richard Wright's Anatomy of Thomas Dixon," *African American Review* 35, no. 3 (2001): 439–58, doi:10.2307/2903313.

- ⁵ “Police Hunt for Assailant of East End Mother, 42,” 1 (quote); *Gordon v. State*, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955).
- ⁶ “City Mother Assaulted by ‘7-Foot’ Man,” *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, 1 (quote); “Johnnie Elwood Gordon: Amended Motion for a New Trial,” December 23, 1954, Harris County District Clerk’s Office.
- ⁷ “Police Hunt for Assailant of East End Mother, 42,” 1.
- ⁸ *Gordon v. State*, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955); “Police Hunt for Assailant of East End Mother, 42,” *Houston Chronicle*, July 30, 1954, 1. *Gordon v. State*, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955). The fifteen minutes are calculated by taking the following times into account: Beard said she left work around 10:10, Gordon guessed he was in the neighborhood between 10:00 and 10:15pm, and witness Robert A. McClendon testified that he saw the assailant fleeing the scene at approximately 10:30 that night.
- ⁹ Census tract homeownership data comes from the 1950 U.S. Census. Beard’s tract was 0049 in Harris County, Texas. I referred to the 1960 U.S. Census (tract 00490000) to ascertain employment data since the 1950 Census does not disaggregate that information by racial categories. For block data, I referred to the U.S. Census’s 1950 housing supplement. U.S. Bureau of the Census, “U.S. Census Population: 1950 Vol. III, Census Tract Statistics” (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC, 1952); *Census of Housing: 1950 (Taken as a Part of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States)*, vol. V: Block Statistics, Pt. 4. Houston - Los Angeles (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 1953); *Census of Population, 1960: The Eighteenth Decennial Census of the United States* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963). For the quote on “colored servility,” see N. D. B. Connolly, *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow South Florida* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 181.
- ¹⁰ “Information On Lynching Stolen,” *The Orange Leader* (Orange, Texas), March 24, 1929, 5 (first and second quotes); Dwight Watson, “In the Name of Decency and Progress: The Response of Houston’s Civic Leaders to the Lynching of Robert Powell in 1928,” *The Houston Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 30 (third quote); “Oldham On Stand,” *The Breckenridge American* (Breckenridge, Texas), October 7, 1928, 1; “Houston Murder Case To Be Heard July,” *Borger Daily Herald* (Borger, Texas), July 21, 1928, 1; “Houston Lynching Trial May Close Saturday Morning,” *The Waco News-Tribune*, October 6, 1928, 10; “7 Held Houston Tex. Lynching,” *Indianapolis Record*, June 30, 1928, 1–2; “Lynching At Houston Results In 4 Arrests,” *Washington Post*, June 22, 1928; “Six Men Are Indicted In Houston Lynching,” *Washington Post*, June 23, 1928; Steven Fenberg, *Unprecedented Power: Jesse Jones, Capitalism, and the Common Good* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013), 149–50; Bernadette Pruitt, *The Other Great Migration: The Movement of Rural African Americans to Houston, 1900-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013), 157–62.
- ¹¹ For example, see Jane Hannah to Allan Shivers, June 4, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; Rosa Perkins to Allan Shivers, May 31, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; Steve W. Eskridge to Allan Shivers, June 4, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- ¹² Gordon B. Hancock, “The Negro’s Point of View,” *San Antonio Register*, February 28, 1958, 4.
- ¹³ Bessie Bizzell Mayrant to Allan Shivers, June 7, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Note that the Texas State Library and Archives Commission requests that researchers not include box or folder numbers in citations.
- ¹⁴ Henry Allen Bullock, “Urban Homicide in Theory and Fact,” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 45, no. 5 (1955): 565–75; “Some Light On Rapes, Lynchings and Riots; Facts and Figures Cited,” *Houston Informer*, October 25, 1919; Lisa Lindquist Dorr, *White Women, Rape, and the Power of Race in Virginia, 1900-1960* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).
- ¹⁵ These fears were also rooted in the idea that race was at all biological. Sharon Block, *Rape and Sexual*

Power in Early America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Danielle McGuire, “‘It Was Like All of Us Had Been Raped’: Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle,” in *Other Souths: Diversity and Difference in the U.S. South, Reconstruction to Present*, ed. Pippa Holloway (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 298–327; Tracey Owens Patton and Julie Snyder-Yuly, “Any Four Black Men Will Do: Rape, Race, and the Ultimate Scapegoat,” *Journal of Black Studies* 37, no. 6 (July 1, 2007): 859–95.

¹⁶ Carter Wesley, “Segregation’s Double Standard,” *Houston Informer*, June 6, 1959, sec. 1, 2.

¹⁷ “Are Negro Women Safe? An Editorial,” *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953, 10.

¹⁸ “Johnnie Elwood Gordon: Amended Motion for a New Trial,” December 23, 1954, Harris County District Clerk’s Office.

¹⁹ Gordon’s guilt or innocence is an open question, though immaterial for the purposes of this work. One year after the assault he reportedly told an *Informer* employee that “he had been doped and didn’t know why he committed the crime,” but just before his execution intimated in a private letter that he had made peace with the fact that people didn’t believe his innocence, that he had a “clean and clear conscience,” had “nothing to hide from anyone,” looked forward to “a crown of life which the Lord, the Righteous Judge, shall give me,” and was willing to bear the burden of paying for a crime that he had “not done.” “Man, 24, Gets Electric Chair For Assault,” *Houston Informer*, June 25, 1955, sec. 1, 24; “Johnnie Gordon’s Last Letter; ‘My Conscience Clear--I’ve Kept The Faith---,’” *Houston Informer*, February 4, 1955, sec. 1, 1, 8.

²⁰ These values descended from a long lineage of Western philosophy that configured the individual as an atomistic social being to whom rights were conferred—the rights to security, to legal recognition, to privacy, to suffrage, and to occupy public space, for example. As historian Joan Landes explains, this individual was male, and the public sphere that liberal individualists constructed presupposed and reinforced the “natural and rational arrangement” of gender inequality. It likewise did the same with class and race. That is, this philosophy only provided for the recognition of certain kinds of people as individuals—white men of economic means. That individualist rhetoric has oftentimes been pitted against the civil rights claims of economically impoverished people, women as a group, and non-white people as a group is therefore no matter of happenstance. Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 37; Colin Bird, *The Myth of Liberal Individualism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Howell S. Baum, *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010).

²¹ H.A. Bullock, “Tomorrow’s Challenge: High Court Gives Us Gap to Bridge,” *Informer*, May 29, 1954, 12.

²² I have endeavored to keep this research as accessible to readers as possible and have therefore relegated historiographical debates to the endnotes for each chapter. Though I summarize the substance of my contribution to these conversations here in the introduction, I point readers who are inclined to read more about these debates to the chapter notes.

²³ *Johnny Lee Morris v. State*, 251 S.W.2d 731 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1952).

²⁴ William Henry Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly: Moderates, Conservatives, and School Desegregation in Houston* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999); Kevin M. Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013); David L. Sjoquist, “The Atlanta Paradox: Introduction,” in *The Atlanta Paradox*, ed. David L. Sjoquist (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000), 1–14; Bruce A. Glasrud, ed., *Anti-Black Violence in Twentieth-Century Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015).

²⁵ Though, as Nathan Connolly illustrates was true in Miami, for a select few black people, a racially segregated rental market could be a huge cash cow because black people could be compelled to pay higher prices as tenants for the least livable conditions. Connolly, *A World More Concrete*, 45–49.

²⁶ Michael Mann differentiates between the “infrastructural power” and “despotic power” of the state. Despotic power has manifested in American history in the form of the Trail of Tears and of Japanese confinement in the Second World War. Infrastructural power refers to the capacity of the state to interfere in civil life and the depths at which the state can “reach” into the quotidian and effect change

(or maintain the status quo). Government powers bestow citizenship (or residency) and proceed to make decisions that affect each individual without their non-coerced approval, including through taxation, records-keeping, and policing, for example. In Houston, infrastructural power was wielded by city administrators, white real estate developers, and white citizens to construct “black spaces” as the city’s literal garbage dumps. Michael Mann, “The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results,” *European Journal of Sociology* 25, no. 2 (1984): 185–213; Hillel Soifer, “State Infrastructural Power: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2008): 231, doi:10.1007/s12116-008-9028-6; Robert D. Bullard, *Invisible Houston: The Black Experience in Boom and Bust* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1987).

²⁷ Owner occupancy was disproportionately low in Fourth Ward by the 1950s and 1960s. This was a far cry from the disproportionately high rates of ownership in Fourth Ward’s Freedmen’s Town witnessed during and immediately after Reconstruction. A great deal of black-owned housing was razed in the area to build public housing for white families, which I discuss further in the first chapter. Jan Lin, *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 98; Mary Louise Passey, “Freedmantown: The Evolution of a Black Neighborhood in Houston, 1865-1880” (M.A. Thesis, Rice University, 1993), 92–93.

²⁸ “Interview of Fred Hofheinz, May 21, 1987 Former Mayor of Houston” May 21, 1987, box 2, folder 14, Marguerite Johnston Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

²⁹ Gordon B. Hancock, “Segregation’s Two Allies,” *Informer*, November 21, 1959, 12.

³⁰ “Sex Crime Spread Fear And Revulsion,” *Informer*, March 15, 1958, 12.

³¹ “Segregation Puts Blight On Most Cities,” *Informer*, March 1, 1958, 10.

³² M. J., “Negro Delinquency,” *Informer*, March 29, 1958, 12.

³³ James Messerschmidt, *Crime as Structured Action: Gender, Race, Class, and Crime in the Making* (New York: SAGE, 1997).

CHAPTER I: MAKING BLACK SPACE

What is “black space?” Scholars have examined the many ways black spaces came to be in cities across all regions of the United States. White flight, racially restrictive deed covenants, racial zoning laws, private real estate development practices, white vigilante terrorism, urban renewal/slum clearance projects, and underbounding (i.e., discriminatory annexation) have all contributed to the building of residential barriers between white and black citizens. Black spaces in Houston emerged out of all of these actions, save for racial zoning, which city voters never approved. These historians have noted the varied expressed anxieties of white Americans in cities in the North, South, Midwest, and West, noting the ways they came to associate “blackness and criminality, blackness and poverty, [and] blackness and cultural depravation” with the urban environment. Indeed, following World War II, as highway projects and suburban development transformed the American landscape, the “chocolate city” and its social ills became the predominant image of “black space.”¹

“Black spaces” in Houston were white creations. Racially restrictive deed covenants defined their borders and limited black residential mobility during pivotal decades in the city’s growth in the early 1900s. Municipal authorities defined their conditions, refusing for decades to attend to the basic needs of old, established black neighborhoods which stood in the shadows of a growing and brightening downtown skyline in the middle of the century. Local white politicians assured the undesirability of black neighborhoods by siting garbage dumps and incinerators in areas of the city dominated by black residents. Law enforcement officers helped control black people’s mobility, over-policing their neighborhoods and their

persons for petty crimes and violations of Jim Crow norms, while simultaneously participating in a so-called justice system that under-protected black victims of crimes—crimes committed by both civilians and police officers themselves.²

But “black spaces” were not merely those locations where black people lived. Black people’s bodies themselves were sites imbued with negative social meaning, replete with the capacity to contaminate and diminish white racial integrity. Most importantly, as historian Grace Elizabeth Hale implies, black people did not *own* black spaces. Rather, “black spaces” could be lynched, beaten by police officers, neglected by city leaders, avoided by white home buyers, limited or expanded on the given leg of a bus route, or taken through eminent domain by the state.³

Once solidified in Houston’s social and political geographies, black spaces operated as containers for surplus and refuse—poor people of all colors, waste dumps, and vice. When white segregationists thought of black spaces they saw squalor, muddy streets, and homes that doubled as firetraps—excuses to demolish the “slums” to make way for white residential development and highway construction. They understood, consciously or not, black spaces as “racial-sexual frontiers,” further justifying heavy-handed containment of the people who resided there. They saw, even in the absence of official crime data, criminal spaces, which warranted police harassment and abuse. What they failed (or refused) to see was that white power, not black occupation, had created these spaces and made them “black.”⁴

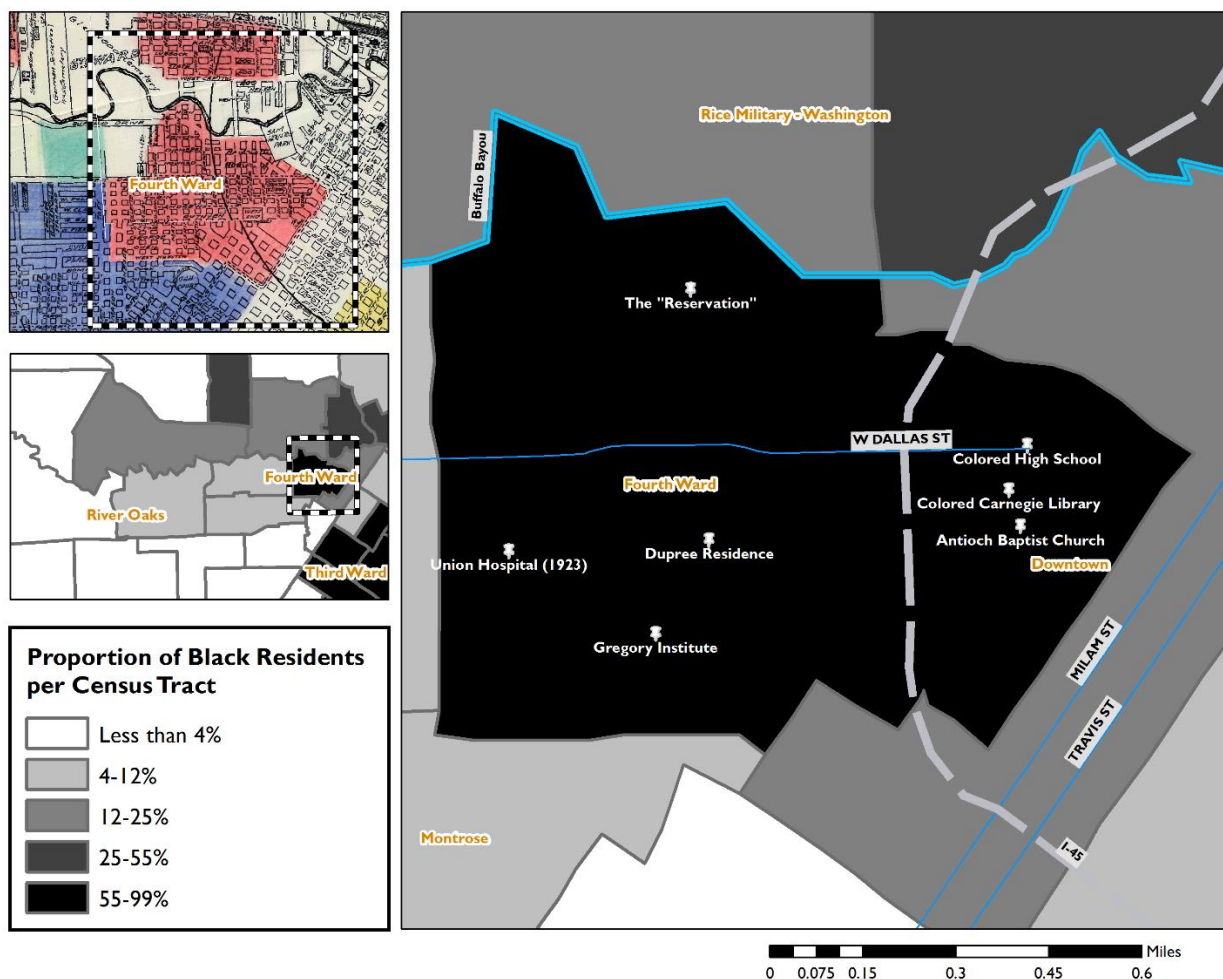
Houston, often left unexplored even by historians of the Sunbelt metropolises, exposes theoretical fractures in urban history.⁵ Studies of cities like New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Philadelphia often highlight the racialization of space through an urban-suburban dichotomy, where blackness and urbanity became conflated following the Second

World War and the onset of post-industrial blight. Research into New South cities like Charlotte and Atlanta often re-state this urban-suburban model.⁶ However, Houston experienced explosive population growth and great economic fortune while other cities experienced post-War decay. Of the largest cities in the country, only Houston and Los Angeles witnessed increases in their white populations in the 1950s.⁷ Thus, while scholars have revealed much about the rise of the suburbs, the phenomenon of white flight, and the subsequent racialization of "urban" as "black," they have overstated the *urban* quality of "black spaces" in their narratives of white flight and fear.⁸ That is, while historians have uncovered the ways blackness and decaying urbanity became ideologically bound to one another, Houston's case demonstrates that white Americans understood black spaces, urban or not, as hazardous geographies.⁹

In efforts to recover black people as more than victims of history, scholars have also produced a mass of research demonstrating black people's civic, political, and economic actions within such spaces. They have challenged the notion that following the 1890s black Americans endured a nadir in race relations created, in part, by their acquiescence to the new status quo: Jim Crow.¹⁰ The result has been a historiography which casts black space simultaneously as a consequence of white racism and fertile ground for black liberatory politics. Yet, as part of a lineage of scholarship that understands *de jure* segregation as black people's accommodation to white supremacist laws and practices that would have otherwise completely excluded them from social and political institutions, this scholarship implies and sometimes explicitly argues that black people were co-conspirators in the manufacturing of segregation.¹¹ This theoretical slippage, concerned as it is with a desire to salve the "agency" of oppressed people in history, obscures the reality that black people's political actions were always contingent on the environs out of which they came.¹² Black

people were never the idle victims of history, and indeed, were actively involved in sustained struggles toward their total emancipation. Their strategies for survival and political reform cannot be accurately described as accommodations to white racism, but rather conditional and pragmatic tactics, almost always—even among black nationalists—toward the goal of a society where color would not be a factor in an individual's life chances. Rather than present the efforts of black communities to improve their quality of life as accommodations to Jim Crow or as displays of black autonomy—historiographical positions that both fail to fully appreciate black racial politics as conditioned responses to historical circumstances—I understand black political action in Houston and elsewhere as structured action. Hence, “black spaces” were not a consequence of black acquiescence to oppression. “Black spaces” were manifestations of oppression itself.

On the ground in Houston, anti-black home-buying patterns produced neighborhoods with higher concentrations of poverty. In Houston this was accomplished, not by racial zoning, but by racially restrictive deed covenants. Segregation, however, did not abate. Rather, it continued and intensified over the remainder of the twentieth century. The “slum” conditions in which these people lived were understood by contemporaries as catalysts for crime. Thus blackness, poverty, slums, and crime became interlocked in popular discourse about what defined “black” spaces. But even those black neighborhoods that did not suffer from high poverty, overcrowding, or high rates of crime suffered the same stigmatization. Racialized law enforcement joined the “raceless” practice of residential segregation, reinforcing social isolation and criminalizing all spaces where black people could make residential ownership claims. This isolation from municipal care and social empathy had lasting racialized, gendered, and classed effects on black Houstonians, while it reinforced the notion that black spaces were criminal.



Freedman's Town was one of the first major "black spaces" in Houston, located just west of central business district. It included western portions of the downtown area until Highway 45 bifurcated the neighborhood from the central business district in 1959. As the Civil War ended, when many recently emancipated black Americans spread across the country looking for family members and new places to call home, several found community in Houston. On what was then the outer limits of the small town of Houston, these migrants built Freedman's Town in Fourth Ward along San Felipe Road (now West Dallas Street). Fourth Ward quickly grew to become a center of black culture and business in Houston in the latter half of the nineteenth century.¹³ Like their emancipated counterparts throughout the South, black Houstonians in Freedman's Town focused much of their energy

on education, particularly literacy. In 1866, the Freedman's Bureau established the Gregory Institute (later Gregory Elementary School) as a place to train black teachers. After 1872, the school began serving as a neighborhood school for those who could pay the tuition. In 1876, Houstonians elected to establish a public school system within the city, of which the Gregory Institute became a part.¹⁴

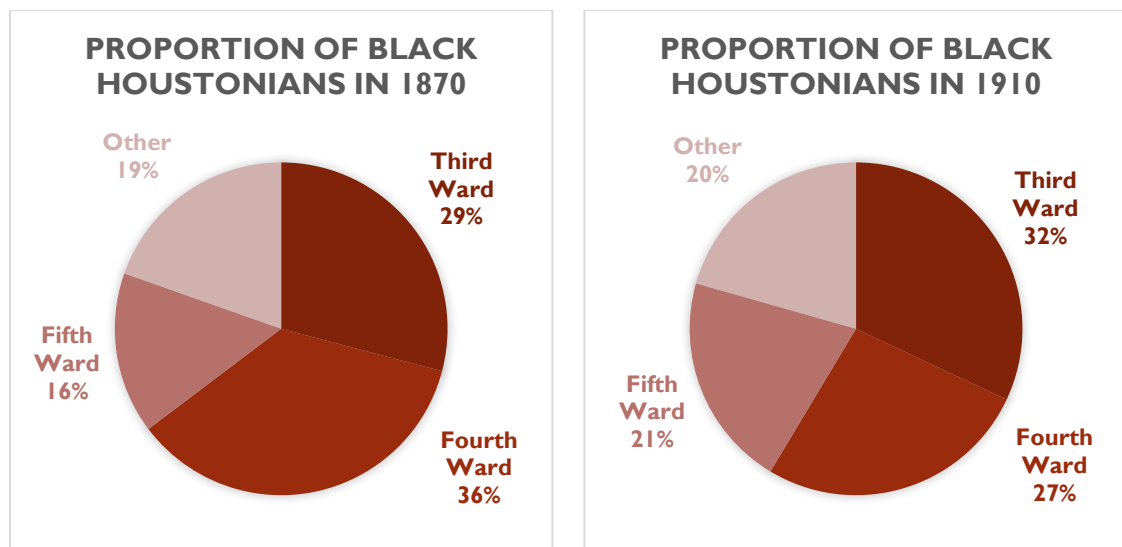
San Felipe Road was "the retail and service artery" of black commerce in the city, a "home to barbershops, furniture and dry goods stores, and two of the three undertakers," as well as grocery stores, jazz clubs, and cafeterias. Closer to the central business district, black doctors, dentists, attorneys, printers, insurance companies, and realtors "gathered to do business in sight of Market Square, primarily in the 400 blocks of Milam and Travis, with some connecting on Prairie." Historian Tomiko Meeks records, "By 1915, over four hundred Black-owned businesses existed in Freedmen's Town [sic]," and she shows that by 1920, the population in Freedman's Town was one-third of Houston's total.¹⁵

Freedman's Town was very much "black" in the city's social geography. The people who lived there understood it as such, recalling the ways "the people seemed to work together to improve" their community. Together the "neighborhood... raised children," educated them, fed them, and cared for them. And by the 1910s, black-owned and black-serving institutions had become concentrated in Freedman's Town and San Felipe District. Additionally, the area became home to black Houstonians' public and community institutions. With the help of philanthropists and their own funds, black Houstonians established Colored Carnegie Library there in 1913, in close proximity to Colored High School and Antioch Church. Union Hospital, established by black doctors Rupert O. Roett, Benjamin Jesse Covington, Henry E. Lee, Charles Jackson, and F. F. Stone as 1918 turned to 1919, was the only hospital where black doctors could practice in the city until the Houston

Negro Hospital was built in 1926 in Third Ward.¹⁶ In short, Lulellia Walker Harrison, a graduate of Colored High School's class of 1928, explained: "We must remember that the center of black life was the Fourth Ward," and when she attended the school "there were several black businesses located right around that school."¹⁷

Like their newly emancipated counterparts in Fourth Ward, the new black residents of Third Ward also sought homeownership, and by 1880 a quarter of black Third Ward residents owned their homes. Growing increasingly popular to black residents of Houston through the early twentieth century, Third Ward "eclipsed" Fourth Ward in 1910 as a residential destination. The size of Fourth Ward would diminish in the middle of the century through eminent domain seizures to construct San Felipe Courts—an all-white housing project—and I-45. In 1870, 35.6 percent of black Houstonians lived in Fourth Ward, and 29.1 percent and 15.7 percent lived in Third and Fifth Wards, the areas in the city with the highest proportions of black residents, respectively (see *Figure 1*). In 1890, Fourth Ward's proportion remained about the same, while Fifth Ward's grew to 19.2 percent and Third Ward's declined to 25.6 percent. In a dramatic reversal of trends, by 1910, Third Ward accounted for 32 percent of Houston's black population and Fourth Ward's declined to 26.6 percent while Fifth Ward showed less remarkable growth rates, only accounting for 20.8 percent by the start of the decade. "By the 1930s," journalist Alan Ehrenhalt notes, "...the Third Ward became the center of Houston's African American life."¹⁸

During Reconstruction, with the help of the Freedmen's Bureau and the American Missionary Association, black residents of Third Ward secured educational opportunities for their children in Frederick Douglass Elementary School. Jack Yates and his Antioch Church members bought land in Third Ward, establishing Emancipation Park in 1872—Houston and Texas's first public park. And as San Felipe District declined, black



Houstonians established new institutions in Third Ward to service their communities. In 1916, Third Ward also housed Blackshear Elementary School, established as Emancipation School. Jack Yates High School, the second high school to serve black Houstonians, opened in 1926 on Elgin Street, about one city block from bustling Dowling Street and the lively Emancipation Park. In 1926, the Houston Negro Hospital (now Riverside Hospital) was built on Elgin as well, the next block east of Yates High School on a \$25,000 plot of land with an \$80,000 building donated by Joseph Stephen Cullinan, the oil magnate who founded Texaco. In 1885, Yates established Houston Baptist Academy (HBA), where the main focus, like many early black schools, was to make a literate population out of freedpeople and provide them with ministerial and vocational training. HBA survived until the 1920s, but the demand for professional education from black Houstonians did not subside. In 1927, the Houston school board established the Houston Colored Junior College, which evolved to become a four-year institution in 1934 under the new name Houston College for Negroes. Students attended evening classes for the college at Yates High School, until in 1947, in response to the Supreme Court's decision a year prior in *Sweatt v. Painter*, the state established the Texas State University for Negroes (now Texas Southern University) in Third Ward.¹⁹

Third Ward had the reputation, at least among the city's black populace, of being more "upscale" than its Fourth and Fifth Ward counterparts—the "brain" to Fifth Ward's working class "brawn," as one journalist put it. Indeed, historian Tyina Steptoe notes of Third Ward that while "[s]ome black residents of the neighborhood were certainly poor... Third Ward had enough well-to-do African Americans and black enterprises to give it the reputation of being Houston's most elite black community by World War II." Born in 1935, Donald P. Lee, who attended Douglass Elementary and Yates High schools remembered

that Third Ward “was a very nice community...it was a lot of nice homes, fairly upscale people that lived in that neighborhood,” especially near his family’s home at Tierwester and McGowen streets. His parents “attached” his mother’s beauty salon to their five thousand dollar house, and their neighbors “were kind of well-educated people.” “It was nice,” he recalled, “what you call middle-class and upper-middle-class homes—people that lived there kinda kept their homes up.” His life there was entrenched in the neighborhood, its people, its traditions, and its institutions—the churches, the restaurants, and eventually the vibrant intellectual community of Texas Southern University: “It was a wonderful life.”²⁰

Commensurate with this middling-class reputation, Dowling Street housed some of black Houston’s most enduring and influential institutions and commercial enterprises of the twentieth century. St. John’s Baptist Church, located at the corner of Dowling and McGowen streets, was the religious institution of choice for many of black Houston’s business leaders. Churches like St. John’s were the center of life for some residents, who, outside of schools, had few spaces to enjoy structured community and for whom transportation to other neighborhoods was often a luxury.²¹ Other churches, funeral homes, several movie theaters, bars, restaurants, and beauty shops dotted Dowling Street. Lee recalled the vibrancy of the street and the surrounding community:

Black people didn’t necessarily go downtown. Now, on the weekends we would probably go to Kress’s or Grant’s... but basically you would buy—we bought our stuff at Weiner’s, or Reubenstein’s—they would be like on Dowling Street which was the main vine for our neighborhood which was in Third Ward—was Dowling Street. And at that time they had mostly the black businesses. And that—kinda—the integration—uh, you went to, you stayed in your neighborhood. You didn’t have to go downtown. Had good shoe stores and the rest of your haberdasheries, this, that, and the other was on Dowling Street. You could just go down there and buy what you need.²²

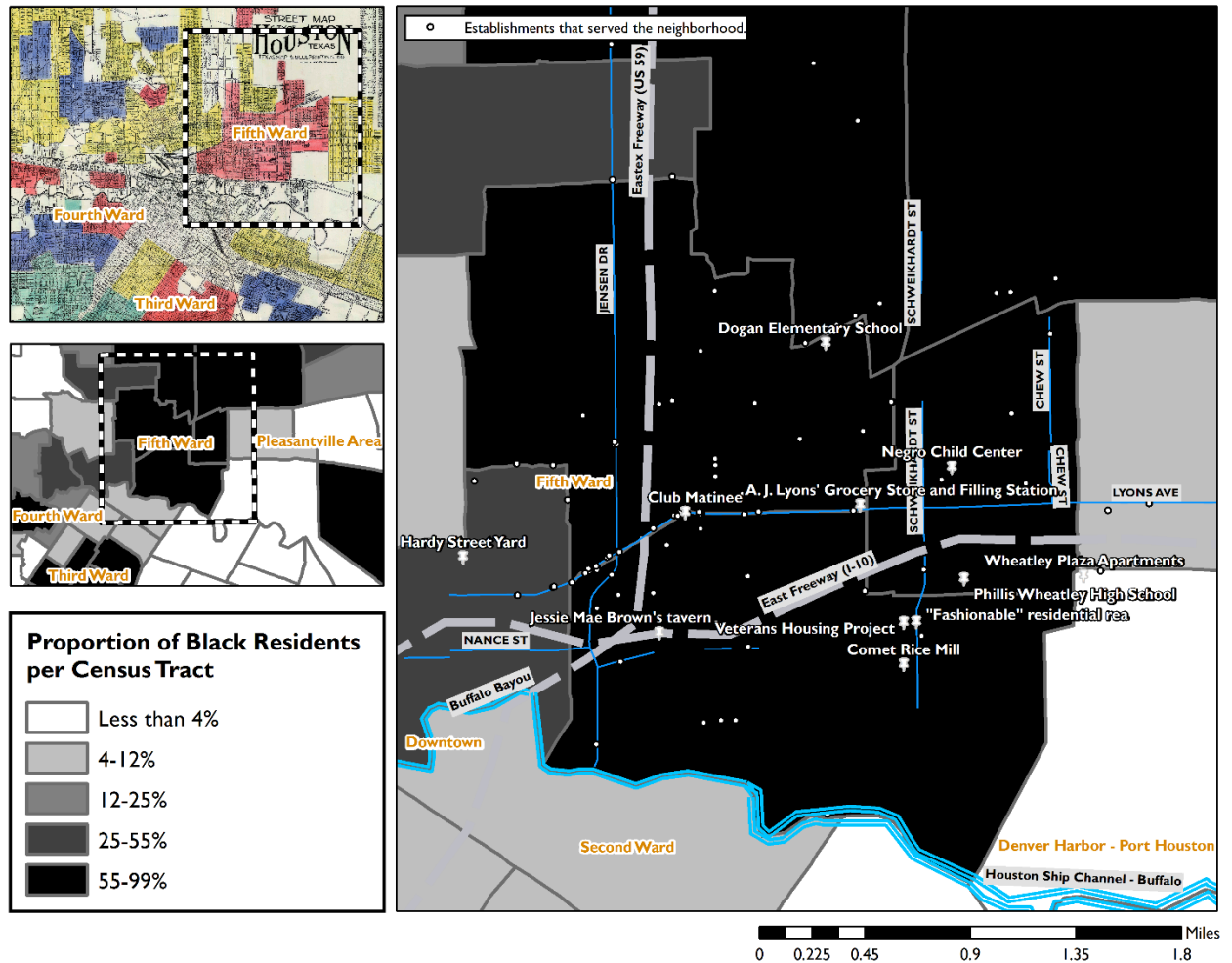
Avoiding the indignities of shopping in segregated spaces, as well as, for some, the inconvenience of lugging heavy bags onto the LaBranch streetcar or the Dowling Street bus,

Third Ward's residents shopped close to home. Lee recalled that the "Hig and Pig and Weingarten's [grocery stores] were downtown" near Prairie Street, but in general, "you didn't have to go to supermarkets." He noted, "Basically, you went to the neighborhood groceries, which was just about one on every corner." Likewise, Annabelle McMillon, born in 1913 in her family's home on Live Oak Street, recalled fulfilling most of her everyday needs by shopping at local area grocery stores and other businesses, at times venturing to the Pilgrim Auditorium in Fourth Ward or the Harlem Grill on Harlem Street in Fifth Ward for dancing and entertainment.²³

But Third Ward also offered its own entertainment venues, and they were among the city's most popular, fashionable, and well-known. The El Dorado Ballroom, built by wealthy black entrepreneurs and philanthropists Anna and Clarence Dupree on the corner of Dowling and Elgin streets, became a destination venue for black musicians from across the United States. There black Houstonians "could dance to the trendier sounds of big bands or urban 'jump blues'" and on its most formal nights onlookers could catch sight of hundreds of guests in "colorful gowns [and] well-fitted tuxedos." The club "was top of the line," blues booking agent John Green recalled:²⁴

They had a restaurant downstairs, with the liquor store on that corner. The club didn't serve liquor in those days; it was a "brown bag" joint. They sold beer and setups. Right next door to the restaurant on the bottom level was Playboy Sport Shop, a clothes store. Then there was a Walker-Brantley Appliance Store—that was in there. And then, later on, Lloyd Wells and Herbert Provost had a photography shop down there. To get to the club you'd go up the stairs, then you'd make a left turn and go up another flight of stairs, and then you were in the ballroom.²⁵

Attracting acts from around the country with its reputation for sophistication and elegance, the El Dorado Ballroom was a crowning jewel for Houston's Third Ward and a centerpiece of the Dupree commercial empire.²⁶



Map 5 Fifth Ward Census tracts in 1960, including HOLC housing securities reference map.

Like Freedman's Town and Third Ward, Fifth Ward witnessed the arrival of hundreds of newly emancipated black Americans at the end of the Civil War. The intersection of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous defined Fifth Ward's border with the central business district's northeast edge. Unlike the other Wards, the Fifth Ward did not exist until the arrival of these new black residents compelled municipal leaders to carve out the new jurisdiction in 1866 with an appointment of two alderpersons. Prior to the start of Reconstruction, what became known as the Fifth Ward was a small residential village on the outskirts of the city. Domestic and foreign-born white folks made homes along mud roads, but "by 1870" the demographics of the area shifted and "561 white and 578 black residents"

called Fifth Ward home, becoming the only of the five existing wards where black people composed a majority.²⁷

In 1871, after a new 1870 city charter allowed black people to hold office, Governor Edmund J. Davis appointed two black men, Hilliard Taylor and Willis Hitte, to both of Fifth Ward's alderperson positions.²⁸ Black residents rapidly built up Fifth Ward to accommodate their social and material needs. In 1865, an enslaved man named Toby Gregg was permitted by his owner, Darius Greg, to construct a church "for the purpose of worshipping only." After emancipation, "Toby's Church" became "Union Church," perhaps in honor of the Union that had fought against the Confederacy. In the late 1870s it was renamed Mount Vernon Methodist Episcopal Church, and remains Fifth Ward's oldest religious institution today.²⁹

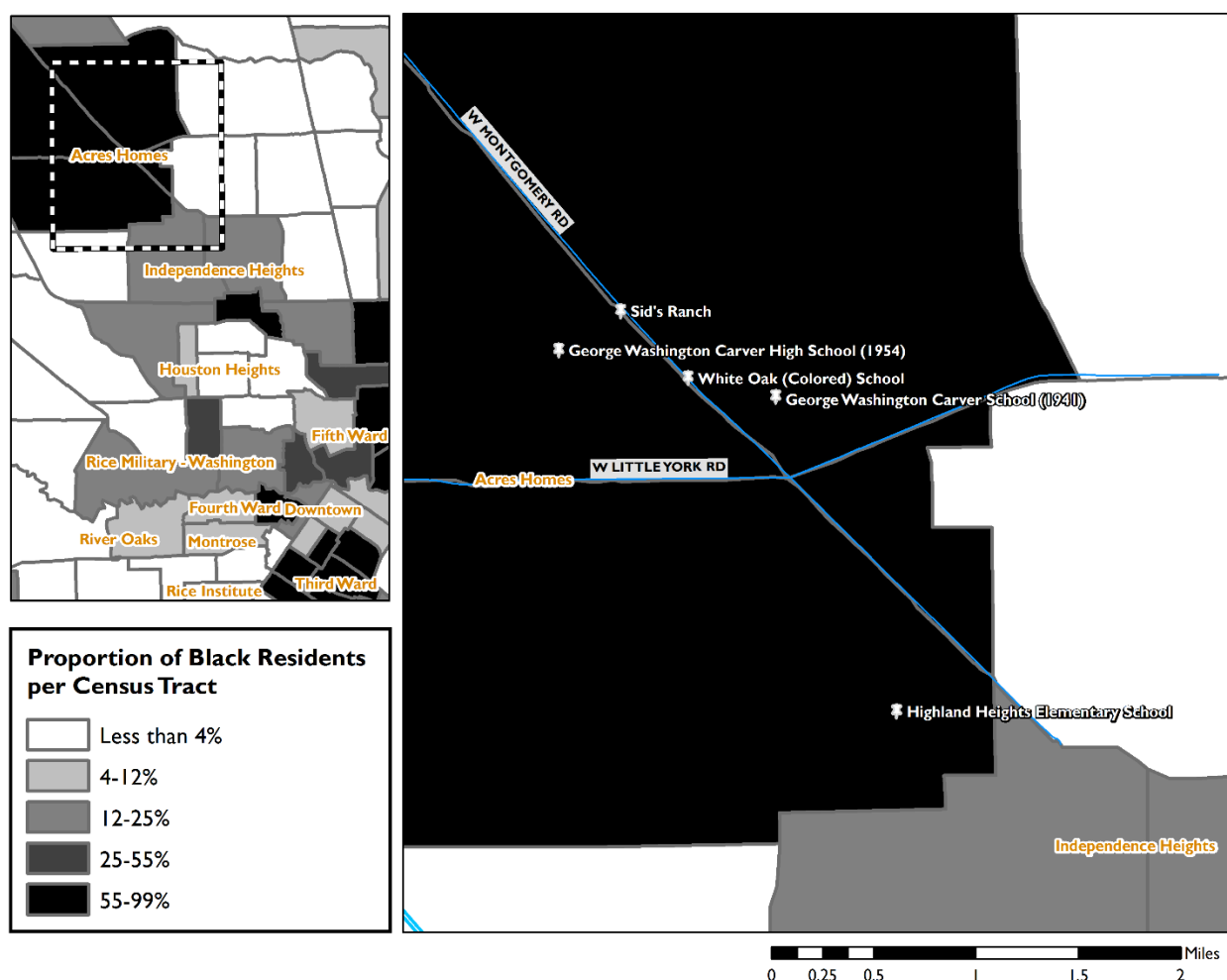
From its beginnings, Fifth Ward attracted a more homogeneous working class population than its Third and Fourth Ward counterparts. As a major entry point into Houston for intercity and interstate commerce along Buffalo Bayou, the area housed the "Fifth Ward Yard," a railway depot built in the early years of Reconstruction, which attracted additional plotting of freight yards, railroad lines, and switches. By 1955, the renamed Hardy Street Yard "had 23 tracks with aggregate length of 52,252 feet." Many Fifth Ward residents lived in the area to work for railroad companies like Southern Pacific, but the wages of many workers living there in the 1880s only afforded them "shanties" that "stood on stilts" and cramped shotgun houses. With less socioeconomic diversity, unlike the Third and Fourth Wards, then, Fifth Ward as a whole became more exclusively associated with the working class, "contain[ing] a higher proportion of workers—30.3 percent—than any other." There, both poor black and white people fought to survive

“conditions” that “bred the hopelessness and despair,” living—or perhaps dying—“in houses which had no bathtubs, running water, or sewage connections.”³⁰

However, as the city’s industry grew—in the 1880s the city “became the top rail center in the Southwest”—so too did the quality of life in Fifth Ward mature. When Louisianan evacuees from the Great Flood of 1927 arrived in Houston, many of them settled in Fifth Ward where they found work with Southern Pacific and forty black businesses along the now-bustling Lyons Avenue. The black arrivals, many of whom spoke French and identified as Creoles and not Negroes, contributed to the vibrant multicultural polyglot that distinguished Fifth Ward from San Felipe District and Third Ward, establishing black Catholic churches that rivaled the community’s Methodist and Baptist ones, and introducing new music, cuisine, and language to the sensory landscape. Indeed, when these newcomers arrived, historian Tyina Steptoe notes, “the section of Fifth Ward that lay between Jensen Drive and Chew Streets was primarily a ‘black space,’” but their arrival marked the advent of Frenchtown, an enclave of black Fifth Ward of about 1.3 square miles that had begun seeing a concentration of French-speaking black transplants around 1922. While these Louisiana Creoles would have still found Fifth Ward streets unpaved, they would not witness the degree of squalor residents lived with in the previous century. Now they would find small homes—sometimes owned by Italian landlords who lived nearby and were sometimes next door neighbors—that were often occupied by single families who raised livestock and who supplemented their diets with vegetable gardens in their yards. They would be able to send their children to Phillis Wheatley High School, serving over 2,500 students as one of the nation’s largest black high schools.³¹

As they did in other areas, a few black entrepreneurs in Fifth Ward managed their ways out of poverty and developed successful businesses that served the maligned

communities they lived in. By the mid-1950s, for example, Louis W. Dickerson had made a fortune in real estate and had also established the Crystal Cab Company to serve black riders, the Crystal Hotel, and Club Matinee—the “Cotton Club of the South”—all located and headquartered on Lyons Avenue. Grocers, auto mechanics, restaurateurs, innkeepers, nightclub managers, and liquor dealers set up shop along the busy corridor, spilling onto Jensen Drive as well, and attracting local residents and black people from around the city to enjoy themselves.³²



Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards were the most urban black communities in the Houston metropolitan area. However, black Houstonians were not only urbanites. Throughout Houston’s expansive twentieth century development, racially restrictive deed

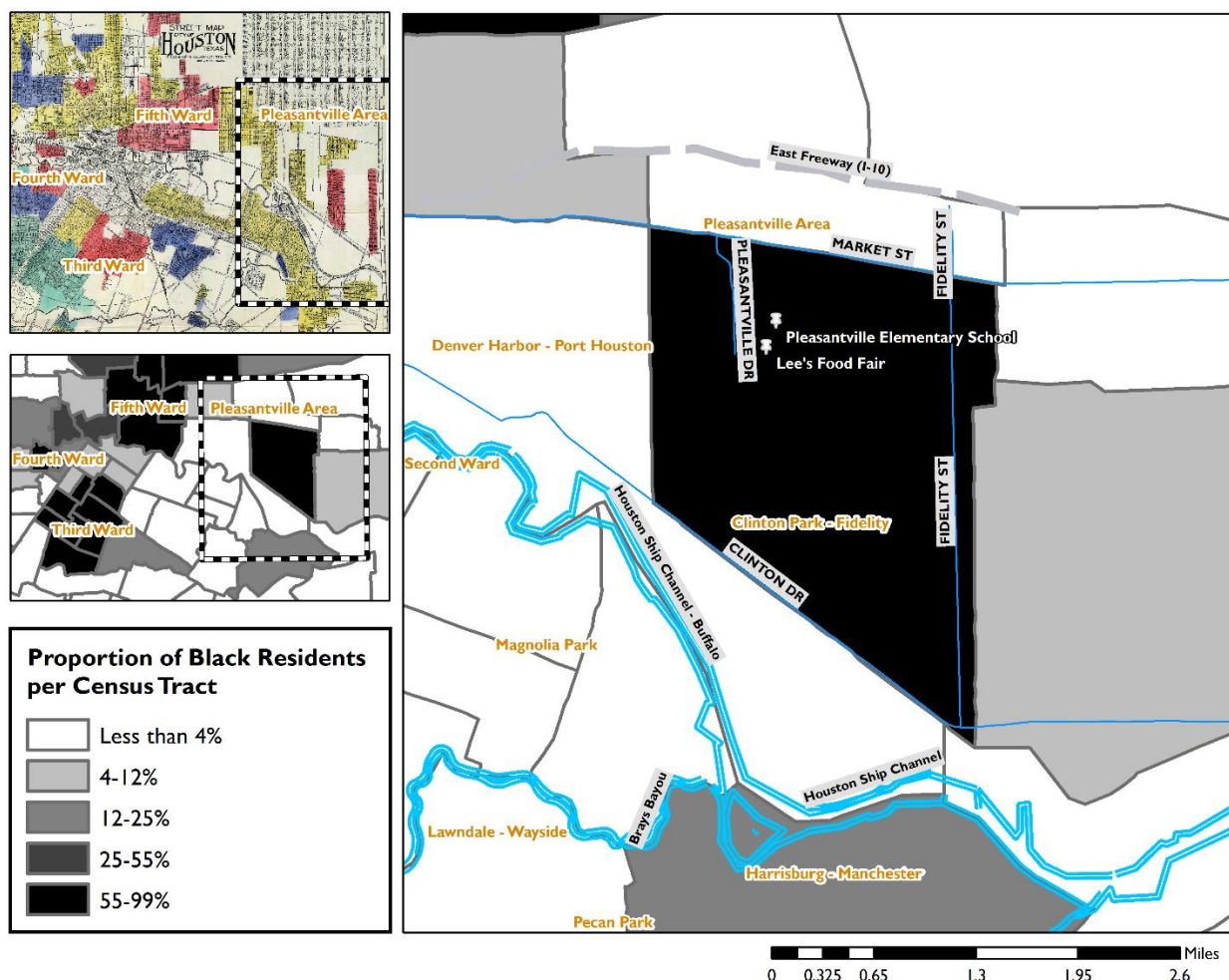
covenants had limited the places where black Houstonians could live, but especially the places where they could own homes. For while black domestics and servants often lived close to and sometimes on the same lots as their employers, they could not own homes in those neighborhoods. To meet a growing demand for homeownership among black Houstonians, in 1910 the Wright Land Company established Acres Homes, also called Acreage Homes by some of its residents, which by 1957 became “the largest all-Negro Community in the United States,” ten miles northwest of Houston’s city limits, covering 631 acres. Black folk looking to remain close enough to the city for urban labor opportunities could do so while also taking advantage of the opportunity to own their own homes, grow their own food, and raise their own livestock. One “old time resident” of the community, Mrs. Abe Grabenheimer, noted that, “Everybody is looking for a place to stay,” and said that she believed Acres Homes remained attractive especially for people seeking to “escape high rents and... rural areas.” By “rural,” Grabenheimer probably referred to those black sharecroppers and tenant farmers who streamed into cities like Houston in the 1910s and 1920s during the Great Migration. With a \$5 down payment and \$5 monthly mortgage at six percent interest, black folk who were able could own an entire acre of land for \$120. This affordability made it possible for them to “live isolated from fear of meeting the rent man in their older years, as practically all of the homes are owned by their persons living within them.”³³

Despite being viewed as “all-Negro,” Acres Homes was always a mixed community, even if it was disproportionately black.³⁴ In 1920, forty black families called the burgeoning community home, and their neighbors included thirty-seven native-born white families, and additional white families from “Germany, Italy, Mexico, Holland, Prussia, Switzerland, and Sweden.” Some described the rural town as idyllic. Residents remembered being able to

“leave your doors unlocked, windows opened and nobody bothered you.” Even in the 1950s, a *Negro Life* magazine feature on the town still described the community as “clean, quiet, at peace with the world.” It maintained a rural quality—less the white paternalist plantation economy—with single family homes sitting on large plots of pasture land, where families raised subsistence crops and livestock.³⁵ The area was mixed-income, the landscape “dotted with homes varying in size from incompleated one-room huts to state[ly] an[d] magnificent two-story homes equipped in every detail with the latest modern conveniences.” From 1950 to 1960, as the city of Houston experienced explosive population growth, so did Acres Homes, doubling in size from 10,000 to 20,000 residents. Increased population density, especially of the middle class variety, enabled Acres Homes’ citizens to build businesses to serve their community’s daily needs.³⁶

Enterprising black people built their own businesses and established them along the main drags of West Montgomery and West Little York roads. These “stores and shops” sufficed to serve “almost every human need” and provided such abundant opportunities for employment that “many of the inhabitants leave the community only on rare occasions.” Of course, many Acres Homes residents continued to travel into Houston for work, but they spent “a significant amount of their income” on businesses closer to home. These consisted mostly of restaurants, the *Houston Informer* tabulated, but also “filling stations, tailors, grocery stores, amusement places, drug stores, cab lines, undertakers, [a]nd practically every other type of business.” Black Acres Homes residents prided themselves on their ability to sustain an “autonomous” community that provided them a quality of life uncharacteristic of big city living.³⁷

Acres Homes’ lack of basic services, however, did not appeal to the black suburban “pioneers” of the postwar period. Like many Americans still reeling from the Great



Depression and trying to take advantage of the New Deal and eventually the post-WWII economy, they shifted their aspirations toward homeownership in modern suburbs. Recognizing this demand for quality homes among black Houstonians and the great potential for profit, in 1941 Cortez Ewing King, a resident in Southampton near Rice Institute, helped establish the Clinton Park Development Company (CPDC) as lead developer. The CPDC's goal was to build the "largest... development ever built exclusively" for black Americans. Unlike many of the Houston area's other all-black or majority-black projects, Clinton Park's developers aspired for the area to feel like a middle class suburb, and by 1959, Clinton Park led one-third of black Houstonians into suburban enclaves. Covering nearly ninety percent of its construction costs with funds from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), the

CPDC set out to construct 533 houses in the new Clinton Park Addition on Houston's eastern edge. The area, which included the Fidelity Addition and eventually Pleasantville, would create a tri-community of suburbs predominantly occupied by black families.³⁸

Developers hoped the subdivision, consisting mostly of single-family, detached houses would eventually have 4,000 black residents in a neighborhood resembling its white suburban, middle-class counterparts in the Houston area. King hoped "to make home owners out of" potential residents, "rather than renters." The FHA participated in this vision, stipulating that all homes had to be built of solid, sturdy material. The CPDC also ensured that all streets in Clinton Park were paved, guaranteed "installation of all essential utilities," including sewer disposal and water service, and provided land for the establishment of a 50-acre park and school. Homeowners, on average, would occupy four- or five-room houses, with plenty green space on their lots for "individual flower and 'victory' vegetable gardens."³⁹

By August 1942, over 500 black families had "moved from overcrowded and substandard quarters in and near Houston" into Clinton Park. Purchasers made \$25 down payments, and for a home worth \$2,435, the weekly payment to the CPDC was about \$4.90. Many of these homeowners benefited from mortgages insured by the FHA—most becoming able to pay off their loans by the early 1960s—and enjoyed lower mortgage payments "in a new community than they had previously paid in rent for substandard living quarters." Funds also provided for police patrols, firefighters, and garbage collection—albeit, the Houston Fire Department directed black firefighters to serve only at stations in predominantly black areas like Clinton Park and Sunnyside.⁴⁰

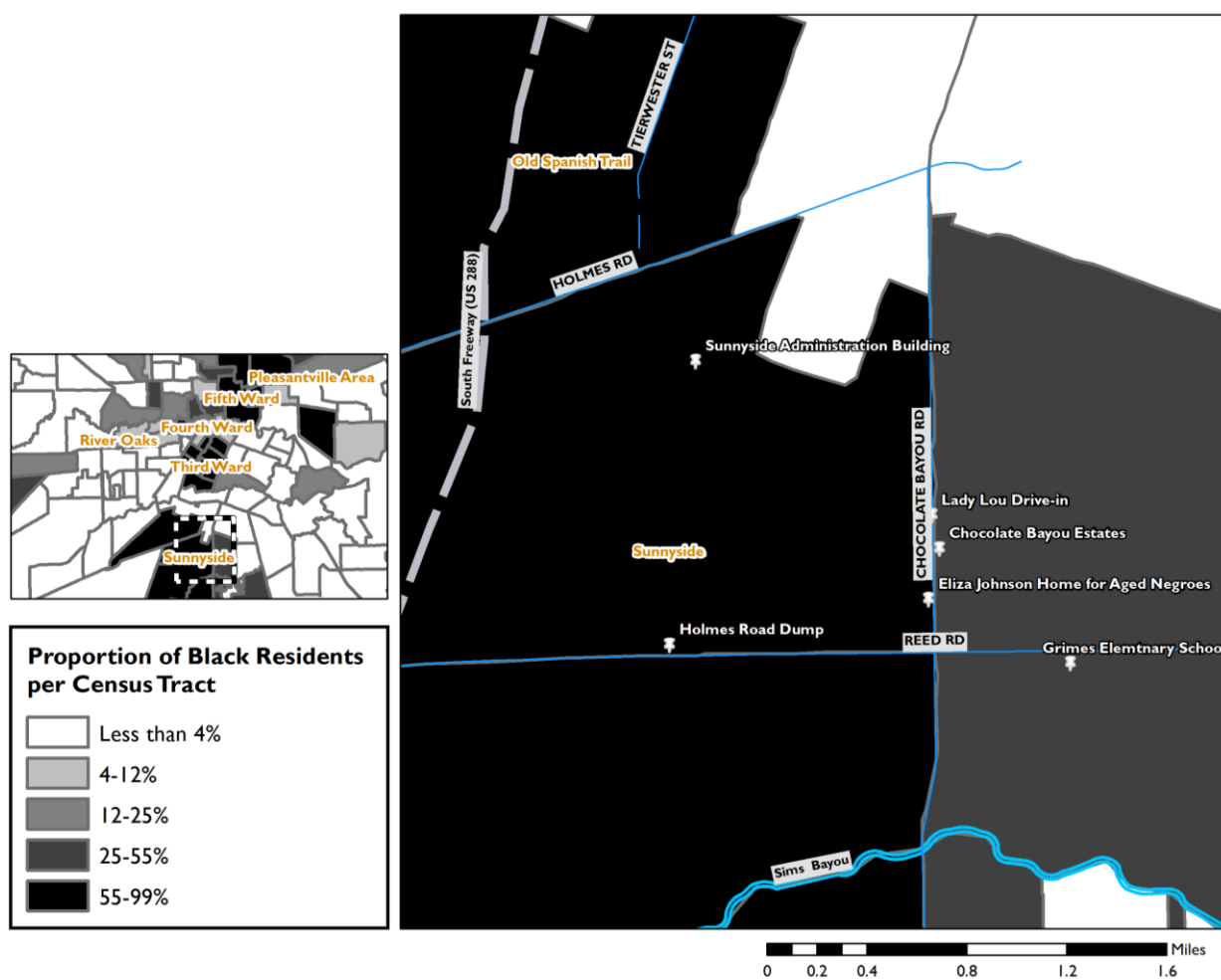
The Clinton Park community quickly saw small businesses crop up to serve residents' needs, including small grocery stores, washer services, barber shops, and drug

stores—“all operated by Negro employees.”⁴¹ In 1945, the *Indianapolis Recorder*, remarking on the success of the FHA project, reported:

Clinton Park is now in operation as a complete, self-sufficient community with a decidedly active community spirit. This type of stable community, with its occupants drawn almost entirely from substandard neighborhoods, shows what is possible when a project designed to meet a specific need, constructed in accordance with the best land-planning practices, and carried to completion with the close cooperation of operative builders, lending institutions, the FHA and the ultimate home owners themselves.⁴²

Residents contributed both money and time to improvements for the neighborhood, establishing their own bus company to “transport workers to war industries along the Ship Channel.” They also worked with developers to establish the Clinton Park Country Club, which included a nine-hole golf course. As Clinton Park grew, it coalesced with the growing and neighboring black communities of Fidelity and the “fashionable subdivision” of Pleasantville to form a black belt around the northeast corner of Houston.⁴³

Like the residents in the tri-community area, the black citizens in the Sunnyside-Chocolate Bayou area had established themselves as a middle class suburb of Houston. Sunnyside-Chocolate Bayou, about six square miles, was established in 1912 by H. H. Holmes and F. H. Holmes as “the first addition south of the City of Houston to be developed and offered exclusively for Negroes.” Three main drags defined the heart of the neighborhood: Holmes Road, Reed Road, and Chocolate Bayou Road (now Cullen Boulevard). Sims Bayou marked the southern border. Lots cost potential owners \$10 down to secure a payment plan of \$10 per month. When established, Sunnyside was very much a rural community and even today retains many rural traits, including “sparsely populated lots, fields, and livestock.” As a farm town on the outskirts of Houston, Sunnyside lacked many of its own public institutions, including its own schools, so “they bussed all the black children to the Third Ward.” However, it did experience rapid suburbanization in the 1940s when



the Holmeses developed plans for several additions to the community, including Sunnyside Place Addition, Brookhaven subdivision, and Sunnyside Extension South.⁴⁴

After World War II, Sunnyside was an increasingly attractive escape from inner city Houston, yet less than ten miles directly south of the center of downtown. One particularly compelling development, the Chocolate Bayou Estates, established around 1950, was touted as ideal for “families seeking new homes” in a strictly residential area. Each house had two or three bedrooms, were secured with “first quality, fire-proof asbestos siding,” fashionable aluminum windows, and “oak and asphalt floors.” Unlike earlier subdivisions marketed to black communities, Chocolate Bayou Estates promised “broad, concrete streets and sidewalks” throughout, as well as “sanitary and storm sewers... excellent drainage, and all

utilities.” To secure the suburban quality of the neighborhood, restrictions ensured that no businesses could be erected in the residential section for twenty-five years. In 1951, the Negro Chamber of Commerce inspected the Chocolate Bayou Estates. The organization’s secretary, Roscoe Cavitt, noted that he was “pleased with the general aspects of the housing project,” and indeed, developers had delivered on the infrastructure they had promised a year prior. One hundred eighty-seven black homeowners now called the Estates their home, with seventy-one additional houses still under construction that year. By 1952, the residents had created their own civic club, which organized meet-and-greets for the new neighbors and recreational activities for community children.⁴⁵

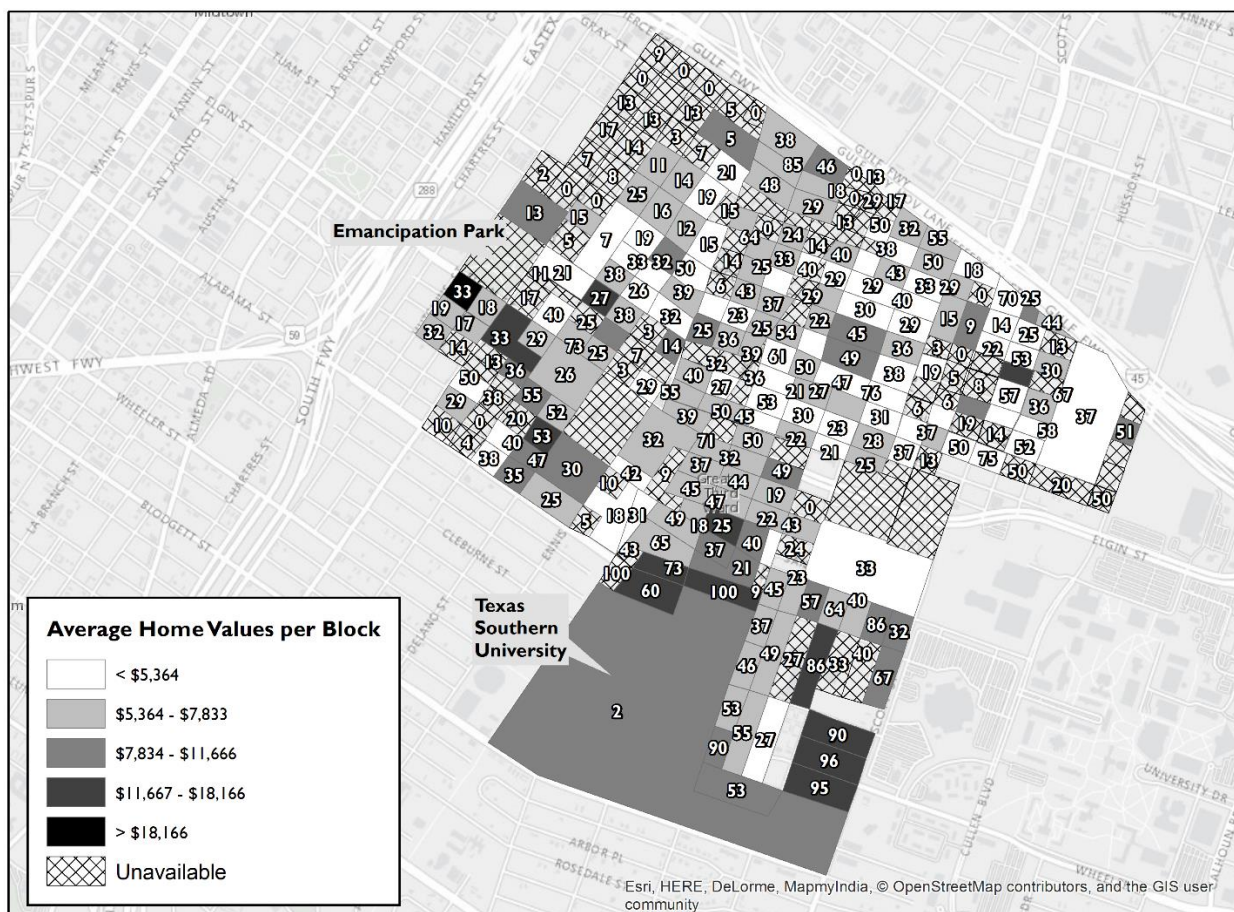
Sunnyside residents, like those in Acres Homes and the Pleasantville area, developed an “autonomous” ethos, “in part because of legally enforced segregation... and also because black [communities] were seeking independence and opportunity in an area where rural traditions were still strong,” architectural researchers Rafael Longoria and Susan Rogers note. The community developed its own gas lines and created its own volunteer fire department, and families stretched their budgets with home gardens. Longtime residents like Dora Mosley recalled when the neighborhood was, indeed, a community, citing, in particular, its low levels of crime: “You never had to put bars on your windows. You never had to leave the lights on at night.” Although after World War II many of the neighbors were new, they quickly developed community around civic goals and in their entertainment venues such as the Chocolate Bayou Drive In Theatre, where, for example, in 1955 they held a special celebration for the showing of “The Jackie Robinson Story.”⁴⁶

Each of these six black spaces in Houston, though they all maintained black majorities, had different historical lineages and different resultant demographics (see *Table 1*). Marriage rates, for example, were higher in the outlying areas. Those areas also

experienced less density, with Third Ward being roughly eight times as populated as Sunnyside. Higher rates of non-white home ownership and overall car ownership also prevailed outside of the urban core. The newer homes in Sunnyside and the northeast tri-community area were noted by Census enumerators as being in better condition on average than those in Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards, though even Acres Homes, which was five decades old in 1960, fared much better than the inner city on this subjective measure. Unemployment rates were higher for the more densely populated inner core, and may have been related to years of completed formal education, although on this measure Acres Homes is an outlier. Despite having fewer average years of completed schooling, Acres Homes residents had higher rates of employment than Fourth and Fifth Wards. About two-thirds of the suburbanites made middle class incomes, while more than half of all families living in the inner city and Acres Homes lived below the poverty threshold. Even among the three wards, however, poverty levels varied significantly, with almost eight out of ten families below the threshold in Fourth Ward, while the same was true for only about six out of ten families in Fifth Ward.

The level of socioeconomic diversity in black neighborhoods was a result of a long history of limited residential options for black Houstonians. By the time suburban expansion began, many wealthy and middle class black folks had made the inner city “Negro quarters” their homes, alongside their working class counterparts. Thus, Third Ward exhibited widely spread socioeconomic indicators that sometimes varied from block to block (see *Map 9Error! Reference source not found.*). A block with 75% owner occupancy might abut another with only 14% owner occupancy. The average home value on one block might be close to \$20,000 while the adjacent block’s homes hovered somewhere around \$6,500 in

worth. Certainly, blocks on the northern fringes of Third Ward exhibited more “slum” characteristics than those closer to Texas



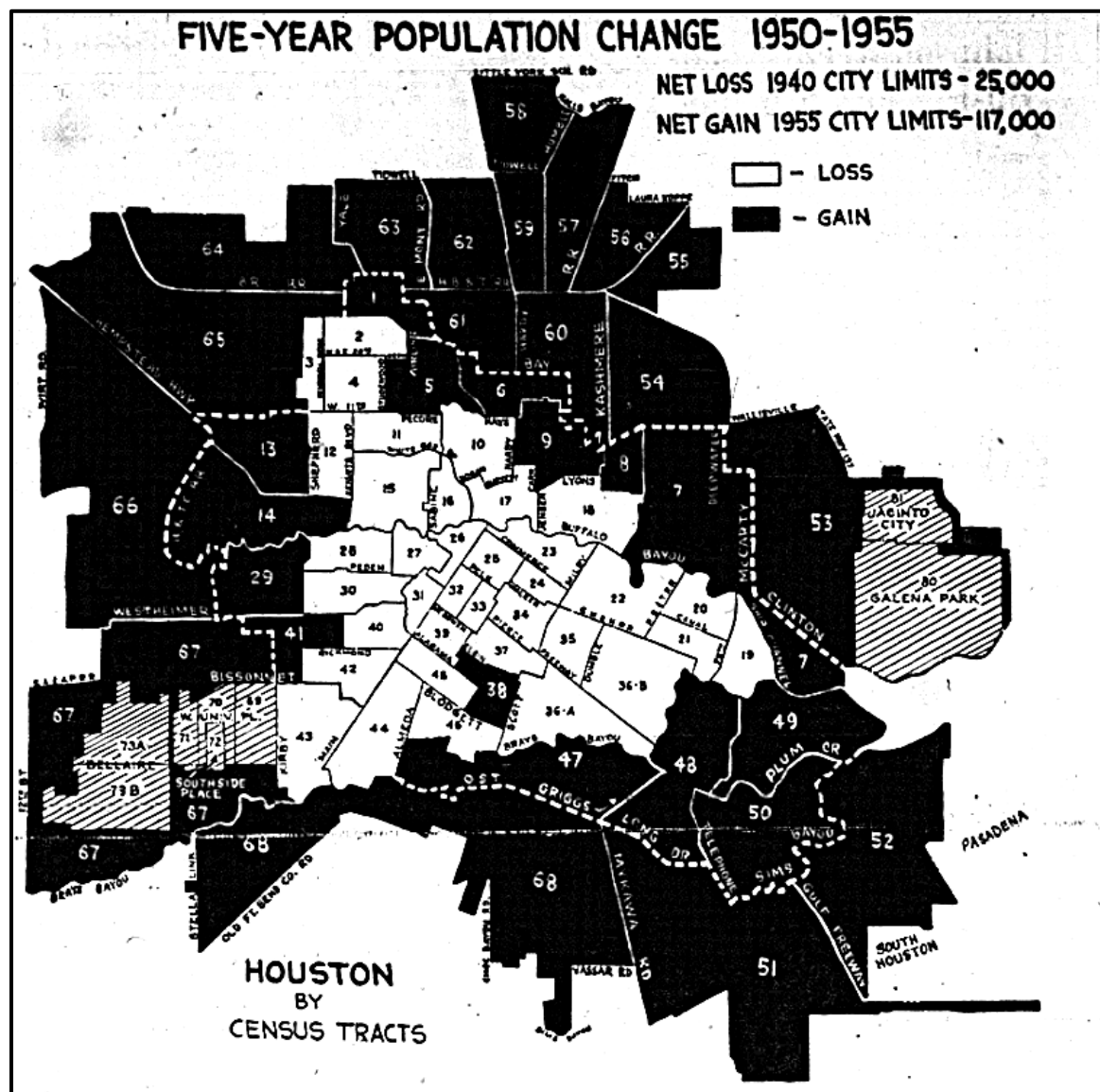
Southern University—for example, those northern blocks had higher rates of overcrowding in housing units, greater block density, and more deteriorating dwellings without running water—even there the quality of life varied greatly.⁴⁷

Thus, “black Houston” was economically diverse and geographically dispersed.

Unlike other cities, sociologist Blair Justice testified before Congress in 1967, Houston had “no large one concentrated ghetto.” While poor black Houstonians tended to have limited housing options and remained clustered in the inner city neighborhoods, “the traditional inner-city transition zones that produce slum housing for urban Negroes have been only one source of residence for Houston black people.” Nevertheless, despite that black

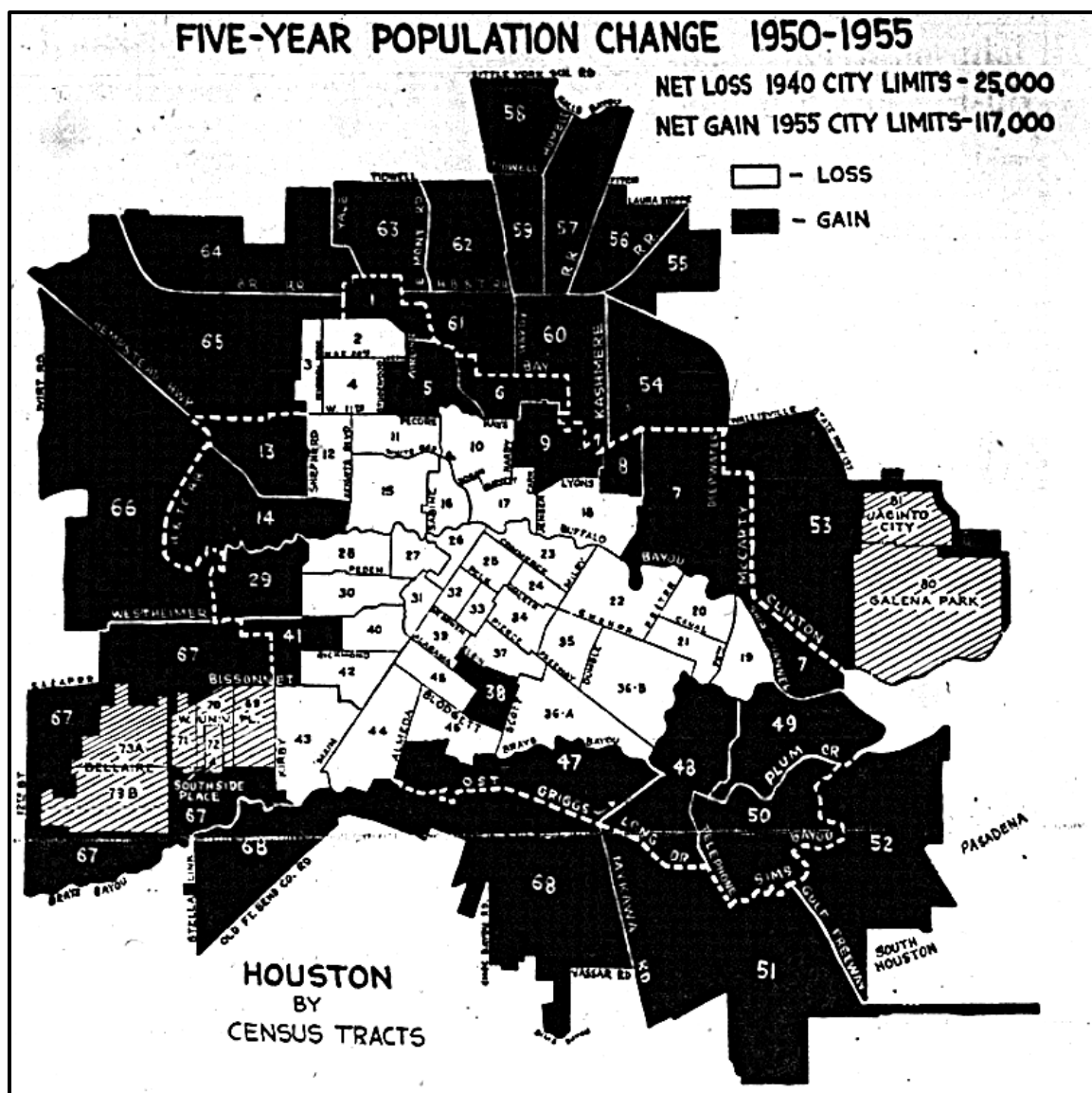
Houstonians' residential enclaves could not all be defined as inner city slums, white Houstonians with means avoided sharing their neighborhoods and amenities with their black counterparts.

Between 1950 and 1955, nearly all of the census tracts in Houston's core experienced population decline, as residents found opportunities for home ownership in the new suburban ideal (see



Map 10). White and black families offered similar reasons for their flight from the central city. They wanted "to get away from traffic" and car pollution; "more fresh air,

more sunlight, and more space”; opportunities to own their own homes and “rear their children in a single-family residence rather than in an apartment.” They fled “the crowded apartments in violence-ridden neighborhoods of the city” and joined communities that signified their newfound middle class statuses in the postwar economy. Black suburbanites expressed the same desires. However, white homebuyers still sought homogenously white communities, and even though *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948) had already determined that racially restrictive deed covenants were unenforceable in courts, private developers, some of them backed by the FHA, marketed communities explicitly to “colored” or “white” homebuyers. For suburbanites “[t]he common denominators were income, age, and reliability,” and their ascendancy into these middle class neighborhoods indicated for them “a democracy of a kind, on a broader spectrum of inclusion than was true of the ‘residential’ and ‘restricted’ neighborhoods in the cities and the earlier suburbs” like Houston’s Riverside Terrace and River Oaks. However, as the *Houston Post* reported in 1959, white suburbia’s “exclusion of Negroes, mainly for fear that they would cheapen real estate values, showed how limited a democratic dream it still was, and how the same dependence on the market that released it from some of the fetters of prejudice kept it fettered in others.” The coterminous development of black and white suburbia in Houston throughout the first half of the twentieth century had not encouraged citizens to stop



Map 10 Houston Post, June 12, 1955.

avoiding their black counterparts. These trends continued through the last half of the century. If white Americans had been escaping the kinds of violence and poverty they associated with black *urban* spaces, they still shunned spaces they saw as black that were not urban, impoverished, or susceptible to crime, vice, or violence. The mere presence of black people as permanent, home-owning residents encouraged white panic—or so the story went.⁴⁸

Black Sunnyside residents fell prey to this white anxiety before and after they came to occupy the new additions to the subdivision in the 1940s and 1950s. As the community grew during the middle of the century, it faced several dangers, including terroristic threats from separatist organizations and environmental abuse at the hands of the city government. Located south of Sims Bayou, the Minnetex-Mykawa community had developed as an unincorporated rice farming town in the early twentieth century, owing its name to the Japanese influence of some of its earliest residents. By 1950, Mykawa was a segregated, white community, wary of the potential of residential integration due to the 1948 *Shelley* decision and the expansion of black homes pressing against the borders of Sunnyside. In June 1950, community members in Mykawa began spreading rumors that “violence” would be used to “force Negroes from moving into homes” in Sunnyside. The Minnetex-Mykawa Civic Club denied that they or their members were involved with the threats, saying, “We have no enmity against Negroes, we just think the city and greedy real estate developers are encroaching upon us and the Negroes by piling them on top of each other out there.” The club, led by resident George Hubert, petitioned the city to solve “their problem of shortage of housing for Negroes” in a way that did not bring them into proximity of white neighborhoods.⁴⁹

Like many white Houstonians, the Club spokesperson projected what he seemed to hope was a sober kind of antiblackness, saying, “We want to see Negroes progress; in fact I am training my children to get ready for non-segregation, but I feel that the city and the greedy real estate developers aren’t doing us nor the Negroes any good by posing traffic and health hazards in crowding Negroes into the area just so they can make money.” Positioning itself as an ally of black Houstonians, the Club argued that developers were “extort[ing]” money from eager black homeowners and renters seeking to escape

overcrowded inner city communities—probably true—only to be fooled into an increasingly “crowded” Sunnyside—definitely an exaggeration. The *Informer* reported that, “One club member said that a developer bragged that he could make more money out of Negroes than if he were building for whites,” because white Houstonians would refuse to be crowded “on top of one another” or pay “the high prices” that black folks paid for insufficient homes. “There are 15,000 Negroes already living in the addition,” the Club complained, noting that real estate developers planned to cram another 20,000 into “substandard” housing. Ironically, though the Civic Club argued on the face that they preferred a more spatially responsible response to the housing shortage for black Houstonians, they still appealed to the Commissioners Court to block advancement of black housing developments south of Sims Bayou.⁵⁰

Hubert and his fellow club members associated black space, intrinsically, with health and environmental hazards. Their fears were not necessarily unfounded, though it was not blackness or black people that made this true, but rather segregation, Negrophobia, neglect, and abuse at the hands of white citizens and government officials that produced space as “black” in the first place. Club members had seen in Houston, and elsewhere, that black neighborhoods often lacked essential municipal services and care. They seemed to associate these conditions with the blackness of the neighborhood rather than the anti-black neglectful patterns of behavior by municipal authorities. The *Informer* remained flabbergasted that white folks could not understand that when black families “encroached” on white neighborhoods it was not because they desired, necessarily, to live near white people, but precisely that they wanted access to the quality-of-life amenities that made those communities desirable to white people: modern housing, running water, paved streets,

sewage, and flood drainage. Residential segregation was resource segregation, and black people, now that they could post-*Shelley*, sought to live where the resources were.⁵¹

But, Hubert and his ilk associated Sunnyside with another black space popular in the American imagination: “Chicago.” He complained that “the crowded conditions, health and traffic hazards caused by lack of proper provision of drainage in Negro neighborhoods” would cement an expanded Sunnyside community as Houston’s own “little Chicago.” It was an odd comparison, given that to call Sunnyside a suburb was sometimes a reach too far—the community never did lose its many rural attributes. However, the association of blackness with the conditions of urban blight, it seemed, would not bow to the spatial realities that stood before Huber and his Club. Hubert ensured the *Informer*, again, that his opposition was not to black people: “We white people have to protect our homes and property” and “hold nothing against Negroes.” Despite these reassurances, however, the black residents of Sunnyside must have been uncomfortable as the new Sunnyside Addition was developed, as reports of bombings of black homes from across the country, and increasingly so in nearby Dallas, headlined newspapers following the *Shelley* decision.⁵²

With little legal recourse to stop the expansion of the “Negro section,” the Civic Club rested its petition on the argument that new real estate development in the area would exacerbate the area’s flood problems. They presented photographic evidence of community flooding, showing their children “standing waist deep in water in their front yard after a heavy rain.” They worried that an increased population in the area would cause not only the bayou to flood, but also would tax the capacity of a nearby sewage facility, causing it to spill its waste into the community. Club member Harry L. Messecar again repeated the claim that his group’s sentiments were not anti-black, though he simultaneously argued that “Negroes living in the area would lower the value of the property owned by whites”

because black people did not improve their homes. As Messecar's non-sequitur evinced, while this white community certainly had legitimate concerns about flooding, as did many neighborhoods in the flood-prone Bayou City, they never completely rationalized their opposition to the expansion of Sunnyside in terms of the environmental risk. Their pro-segregationist thoughts and their stereotypes concerning black people always surfaced in their protests. Their concerns about health, housing quality, and home values reflected their beliefs in the intrinsic relationship between black spaces and slum conditions.⁵³

Many of these racial stigmas reflected the material conditions of some black-occupied blocks in the city's core. However, while white Houstonians related negative stereotypes to black people—whether due to biological or cultural inferiority—black Houstonians understood that their residential areas suffered as a result of neglect and abuse by white city officials. They also knew that decreases in property values were not the result of black folks moving in—in fact, property values tended to rise as black homebuyers paid more to buy into middle class neighborhoods. Indeed, studying real estate advertisements, *Informer* editorialists found, “New housing for white [people] with every modern convenience including planned neighborhoods is offered to white [buyers] at prices below Negro offers for houses outdated by twenty years.” Rather than being a consequence of black “encroachment,” declines in property values could be traced to municipal action and white avoidance of and flight from racially transitioning residential spaces. White racism, not black bodies, caused declines in neighborhood desirability and, ultimately, material decline. White flight and fear created “black spaces.”⁵⁴

So, too, did municipal abuse and neglect produce “black spaces.” Vibrant and enterprising as it was in the eyes of black Houstonians and black visitors to the city, many white folk still identified the “Fourth Ward” as merely the “home of the Negroes in this

city.” They described the houses as “for the most part old-fashioned frame shacks.... all in a dilapidated condition.” The *Pittsburgh Daily Post* emphasized the decayed condition of the buildings: “The shutters are hanging on the houses by strings and wires. Here and there the chimneys have toppled in. Almost all of the houses are built on strong stilts to protect them from the water.”⁵⁵ Yet, the condition of Freedman’s Town was a reflection of city neglect and concentrated poverty, rather than the desires of the residents. The streets flooded during rains because the city refused to install drainage on the streets; in fact, the streets only existed because black residents manufactured and laid the bricks that defined them. The city’s neglect of Freedman’s Town, its residents, and its need for public services were also reflected in the environmental hazards the neighborhood was exposed to, particularly the city’s decision to site a garbage dump and incinerator there in the 1920s.⁵⁶

White Houstonians, and even the national press, understood that Freedman’s Town was the “negro quarter” of the city. Concomitant with a view of black spaces as areas of crime and impropriety, in 1907 the city established the “Reservation,” a sanctioned red-light district covering ten blocks of San Felipe district. As the city’s new vice district, “gambling and brothels flourished” there and “forc[ed] many black families to abandon the homes that they had built there.” Thus, the “negro quarter” became synonymous with prostitution, a seedy reputation it did not necessarily lose after the city shuttered the Reservation in 1917. Through this racialization of space and criminalization of race, all of San Felipe district’s residents, not just those who frequented the Reservation, were overexposed to police brutality. Meanwhile, officers rarely accosted white visitors to the Reservation, and little was done to disrupt business. Historian Tyina Steptoe notes most of the “Reservation’s saloons, gambling houses and shooting galleries... were owned by well-known white citizens.”

Indeed, “Police reportedly concentrated ‘almost exclusively’ on arrests of black prostitutes, gamblers, and bootleggers” while the Reservation existed.⁵⁷

Neglect and abuse toward Fourth Ward extended into the middle of the twentieth century, as eminent domain practices razed the homes of thousands of locals. In 1938, the Housing Authority of the City of Houston (HACH) demolished the area that had been the Reservation to develop the San Felipe Courts—a public housing project for only white residents during the Second World War. Black Fourth Ward, historian Zachary Montz explains, “hemmed in by an expanding downtown and, to the south and west, by race-restricted white housing developments, was in the way.” In the name of “slum clearance,” about 1,300 black Houstonians faced displacement by HACH’s plans “to clear Negroes out of this area.” As Montz argues, “Indeed, the San Felipe project was only the beginning of a planned racial transformation of the [Fourth] Ward,” where HACH hoped “[o]ver a period of twenty or twenty-five years Negroes will probably be eliminated from the Fourth Ward altogether...”⁵⁸ White authorities believed the Courts, completed in 1944 after twenty-five percent of Freedman’s Town land was seized through eminent domain procedures, would “replace one of Houston’s undesirable residential sections with one of the finest beauty spots in the south,” as what remained of Freedman’s Town was separated from the new housing project by a chain link fence.” Even when the city did well, such as when the Houston Housing Authority constructed Cuney Homes, a public housing project in Third Ward near Houston College for Negroes in the 1940s, it failed to adequately consider the needs of black Houstonians, who needed far more than the 3,868 units provided by the new development and Kelly Courts in Fifth Ward. And while the San Felipe Courts in Fourth Ward had displaced black families the city refused to fill hundreds of vacancies there with

needy black Houstonians because the Courts were to remain a segregated “white” housing project. Black spaces were to remain black; white ones were to remain white.⁵⁹

“Slum clearance” and “urban renewal,” historian Carolyn Elizabeth Whitsitt explains, “became a euphemism for ‘Negro removal’” and displaced black Americans, in Houston and in cities across the country, “on a disproportionate scale.”⁶⁰ Freedman’s Town residents witnessed this first hand, when after just losing their fight against HACH to bulldoze seventeen blocks of their neighborhood, also found themselves cut off from several of their long-standing institutions and businesses by the construction of the Gulf Freeway (I-45). By 1962, one-third of Freedman’s Town was demolished for the highway, including the Colored Carnegie Library. While towns between Houston and Galveston benefited from the new superhighway—some “land values along the right-of-way had jumped as much as 67 percent,”—historian Cary D. Wintz explains that the interstate “eliminated many of the [Fourth Ward’s] most important buildings and destroyed the geographical integrity of the community.” Another 40,000 residents were displaced and the neighborhood descended into decay and decline over the next several decades, even as Houston’s economy boomed.⁶¹

Like the black community of Fourth Ward, Fifth Ward’s commercial life was disrupted by highway construction that would further encourage urban sprawl to the benefit of a middle class that could afford to commute to the city center but live on its developing outskirts. “In Houston,” sociologist Jan Lin reports, “the building of the highway system served the interests of middle-class Anglo suburbanization at the cost of near-city minority neighborhoods, which did not have the political clout to contest these land-use decisions.... Minority enclaves were not just ‘in the way,’ but ‘invisible’ to the southern Anglo industrialists of Houston.” The trouble began in 1952 with plans to build Eastex Freeway

(U.S. Highway 59) through Fifth Ward and into downtown. What had once been a collection of homes and businesses along Whitty Street would eventually become a massive freeway. While some residents could afford to move or build elsewhere—one woman planned to purchase a home in Riverside Terrace—there remained “a very large number who will not be able to build any time soon.” At the same time, the city ordered the demolition of a Veterans housing project in Fifth Ward, but promised to build the Wheatley Plaza Apartments to house about 108 of the families displaced by both developments. The highway bisected the community from north to south, spawning dozens of dead end streets, pathways that had once connected Jensen Drive to the majority of the residential community the businesses there served. Meanwhile, residents near the deconstructed Veterans housing project, many of whom were middling and middle class and had developed the Schweikart Street area into a “fashionable” residential neighborhood, feared that the empty lot would “likely... become the site of some giant industry...”⁶²

With construction beginning in the late 1950s, East Freeway (I-10), running east to west, perpendicular to U.S. 59, severed the remaining concentration of lower Lyons Avenue businesses from the eastern portion of the community. I-10 functioned as a formidable wall, defining the northern limit of the “the Bottom,” as the area between the freeway and Buffalo Bayou came to be known. What had formerly been “choice real estate” and had included the Schweikart area now was the home of “the biggest rats, meanest dogs, worst stench, and deepest mud in Fifth Ward, all this in a shroud of constant steam and smoke from burning rice-hull piles stacked by the nearby Comet Rice Company.” As a result of complete negligence concerning the economic, environmental, and social effects of the highway, I-10 transformed the Bottom into a “literal... dump.” The two noisy freeways and the smog they brought with them hugged Kelly Courts, which had been opened in 1940 as

black public housing, and physically separated those residents from the rest of the community. The environmental and commercial impact on Fifth Ward was undeniable. Historian Joe R. Feagin argues, “These two freeway systems literally crucified the area by creating large freeways in a cross pattern through its heart. This massive cross disrupted community life during its construction and permanently destroyed many black homes and business...”⁶³

Businesses “all but abandoned” the people in Fifth Ward, and once the highways were completed, the city returned to its habit of disinterest in the area. In the middle of January in 1955, the Greater Fifth Ward Citizens League organized community members at Porter Institutional Colored Methodist Church to compel visiting councilpersons to finally pave the area’s “mud-soaked” roads. While Mayor Roy Hofheinz and the city council had allocated funds for road pavement in eighteen areas of the city, “only one Negro community [was] included in the number”—Houston Gardens, which had been built under the direction of the New Deal’s Suburban Resettlement Administration. Residents expressed their displeasure with the city government: “Approximately 80,000 Negroes make their home in Fifth Ward and most of them are mud and water weary.” The city complained that infrastructure development in the area would be too expensive and that the city had already improved drainage on the majority of Lyons Avenue. Citizens rebutted that this was the price when an area “had been neglected so long.” Meanwhile, homeowners and businesspeople continued to pay for lack of city services: a local clinic suffered \$8000 damage due to standing water after heavy rain and was forced to install a \$5000 pump in its basement to prevent the establishment from developing an underground pool.⁶⁴

The following week, Fifth Ward residents pointed to their water-logged streets, businesses, and homes as evidence of the city’s neglect. The *Informer* reported that the

community “felt a hard blow and were angered this week from unfair tax-money distribution when heavy rains again dumped high waters on Lyons Avenue.” Still expected to find their way to work, “[m]any of the gentle women who are also bread winners” waded through the cold, knee-deep water during a week where the average temperature hovered around fifty degrees Fahrenheit to find their way to distant bus stops. The Lyons bus route, of course, could not run. Many had to forgo their wages for the day entirely. A. J. Lang, who owned a grocery store and filling station at Lyons Avenue and Waco Street across from Porter Institution CME, again found himself sweeping water out of his business establishment: “I have lost a whole day’s business at the filling station and café located next to the filling station,” he reported. The sprawling freeways made things worse for children traveling to school after heavy rains, including 300 who attended the segregated Dogan Elementary School and had to “walk through mud and water in addition to having to go blocks out of their way enroute to school because of dead-end streets” created by the highways. Taxis refused to service the area and grocers decided their trucks were not worth risking to stock their shelves. The city’s historical and contemporary neglect—a consequence, the *Informer* believed, of the only recently toppled white Democratic Primary process—simply made days and weeks like those in the middle of January insufferable for Fifth Warders.⁶⁵

Even Houston’s black suburbs of Pleasantville, Fidelity, and Clinton Park suffered a “history of municipal neglect,” despite that they had been developed with conveniences of paved roads and modern plumbing. Houston’s rapid annexation of outlying suburban areas in the 1940s and 1950s had increased the city’s tax base, but many of these suburbs endured a lack of city services as municipal boundaries grew faster than the city’s ability to meet every residents’ needs. However, residents of predominantly black subdivisions annexed by

the city noted lengthier waits before they received city services. The Fidelity area of Clinton Park, for example, did not receive water service from the city until 1954. Like many residents of independent black subdivisions had felt prior to annexation, Fidelity's homeowners did not trust that the city had their best interest in mind when they debated their community's inclusion in the city's newly developed water plan that year. At a Fidelity Civic Club meeting the previous year, several speakers voiced concerns about water quality and "stated that about 3 children [have] taken sick from the water that is being drank from the wells." The contaminated water had given the children typhoid fever, the Civic Club learned a week later. Members complained that "the mayor" had no "concern" for the community, and neither did Houston's industrial leaders, whose trucks dumped trash on the side of the railroad tracks that ran through their neighborhood. Their fears came to fruition: even though the city agreed to service the area with running water in 1954, the community was still without sewage service in 1956. As 1959 came around, without improvements to their streets, their sewage, and drainage ditches, residents feared that their suburban retreat was becoming a "slum area." Residential segregation indeed was resource segregation for black Houstonians.⁶⁶

Annexation proved to be a point of contention for Houston's suburbanites—and especially for predominantly black communities. They noted the systemic neglect city leaders displayed toward areas already incorporated into the city, and worried that like those black families, they too might bear the burden of "unfair tax-money distribution," as the authorities used tax revenue to improve white communities at the expense of black ones. Houston annexed Brookhaven, the northernmost portion of Sunnyside in 1949 and the remainder of Sunnyside in 1956.⁶⁷ Unfortunately for its residents, like other areas of black Houston, city councilwoman Ada Edwards noted in 2007, "Sunnyside has been

marginalized. They were annexed in, and then they were forgotten. What was once a jewel became a dumping ground for the city.” Indeed, Sunnyside, like Fourth Ward, became a literal dumping ground for Houston. In 1967, the city added an incinerator to the Holmes Road Dump, “the city’s principal landfill from the 1940s through the mid-1960s.” The Dump was adjacent to a community park and just across from Sunnyside Elementary School on Bellfort Street and had always presented a health risk to the surrounding community. The incinerator was “designed to burn 800 tons of garbage a day,” releasing toxic byproduct into the air where Sunnyside residents lived, worked, and played. As historian Robert D. Bullard argues, the city government sited dumps and incinerators with particular attention to the racial make-up of the communities: “All five of the large city-owned garbage incinerators were located in African American and Latino neighborhoods.” Sometimes the entire city could find itself at risk for neglect of black spaces. For example, in 1946, Houston suffered a polio outbreak of “epidemic proportions,” setting a record of “19 new cases and three deaths for any 15-day period.” The city’s health officer, Dr. Fred K. Laurentz, believed that the Holmes Road garbage dump and its community of flies were to blame.⁶⁸

The Holmes Road dump marked Sunnyside, already engraved as a “black” area in Houstonians’ social geography, as filthy and disease-ridden.⁶⁹ For example, residents of Bellaire, a lily-white enclave city that refused annexation to Houston, viewed the Holmes Road dump as a breeding ground for polio-carrying flies, and the community that surrounded it as inadequately sanitary as a result. Likewise, an editorialist at the *Rice Thresher* complained that filthy students should “learn to keep the [student] lounge clean or adjourn to the Holmes Road Dump.” This signification was not unfounded: the Holmes Road dump indeed negatively impacted the quality of life for its neighbors and, according to Homer Williams, a longtime resident of Sunnyside, left “scars” on “this whole area” as a

community where the city could dump its trash. However, the intentional siting of the dump and the incinerator in a black community indicated the ways city and county officials responded to the demands of white communities and *created* black spaces as appropriate containers for filth and refuse.⁷⁰

This pattern of neglect and abuse made those black citizens still outside of the city limits question the value of annexation. By the late 1950s, Acres Homes residents understood that as a sparsely populated, predominately residential area they could not amass enough tax revenue to furnish their own comprehensive infrastructure. Annexation by Houston, some residents hoped, would change that. The city, however, had developed a pattern of only annexing “improved” black communities—specifically those like Sunnyside that had purchased and built their own water-supply infrastructures. In 1957, for the writers at the *Informer* it seemed clear that “the city does not want to take in either... Acres Homes” or newer additions to the “Chocolate Bayou area” based on the ways the Houston had drawn its own lines of incorporation. Deterred by the severe municipal needs of Acres Homes, as well as its sizeable black population that would come to bear on the city’s local politics, Houston seemed determined to avoid annexing the community, even as it voraciously added to its city limits throughout the middle of the twentieth century. Indeed, the city incurred the debts and took on responsibilities for white subdivisions it annexed throughout the 1950s and 1960s, while mostly avoiding “pockets of semirural, largely Negro population[s]” that “lie just outside the city.” Underbounding, too, contributed to the stigmatization of “black spaces” as undesirable and hazardous.⁷¹

As an alternative to annexation, some residents suggested to incorporate Acres Homes into a township in 1957, a proposal which citizens hotly debated. They gathered at Phillips Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church, where the Protective Voters League

and several white business owners voiced their opposition to incorporation. They believed incorporation would quickly increase property tax bills, and desired instead that Houston would annex the area and thereby allow voters access to city services that they needed, including police protection and regulated utility service. Supporters of the petition argued that if absorbed into a large city like Houston, Acres Homes's residents would effectively become minority voters in local issues. Noting the racialization of space and the ways Houston had historically treated areas marked as "Negro," supporters of incorporation also argued that Acres Homes would "be made into 'another Fourth or Fifth Ward' with bad streets and lack of proper drainage, despite the fact that the homeowner will be paying the same city taxes." They pressed that white business owners had already leveraged their capital and influence to prevent the development of a central water system in the town by scaring homeowners into believing they would be mortgaging their homes away to pay for it. Now, they argued, these selfsame white people "do not want to have to pay taxes to support a Negro town." If Acres Homes was to remain both black and increasingly self-sufficient, the petitioners argued that they should avoid annexation by Houston, arguing that the community had already been a victim of county neglect. For example, they noted the "county had built a multi-million dollar park for white children in the district and had placed a few swings under some trees for Negro children." Supporters like Hiram Jackson, an Acres Homes resident, remarked on the need to improve Acres Homes as, not just a black community, but a black-owned community: "He said that the area is a large community that is 'without adequate local self-government' and that the general citizen has been 'brainwashed into thinking we cannot do what other races are doing all over the world.'" Jackson suggested that incorporation would be an act of subversion against "the mother country"—signifying Acres Homes and black Americans as colonized subjects.⁷²

Thus, despite their differences, black spaces in Houston shared experiences of abuse and neglect at the hands of city government, through underbounding and eminent domain practices, and by white ideological terror, white avoidance, and white flight. As spaces of refuse they seemingly invited the city to site a vice district in the midst of their homes, incinerators close to their grade schools, and clusters of public housing in their neighborhoods. Containing and surveilling these spaces allowed city officials to remind the people therein to never forget their place in the racial hierarchy of the Jim Crow city.

The irony, for many black Houstonians, was that the city pushed crime into their neighborhoods and then failed to protect the residents even as law enforcement officers over-policed their spaces. In 1917, for example, when black soldiers of the Twenty-fourth United States Infantry were stationed at Camp Logan in Houston, they were drawn to Fourth Ward for food and entertainment. When these soldiers marched through the city to demand respect from the Houston Police Department after several clashes with Jim Crow authorities, white police officers, soldiers, and guardsmen seized Freedman's Town, where they searched for black soldiers who had been involved in the mutiny. In the process, they disarmed private black civilians of their firearms.⁷³

Understood as a black space, San Felipe District had "faced a constant white presence in the form of law-enforcement officials," even before the 1917 soldier rebellion. Historian Tyina Steptoe notes: "Police officers buttressed the white power structure in Houston by enforcing Jim Crow authority and demanding submission from an expanding black population." Thus, black residents could expect over-policing and under-protection by a city police force that viewed black people as inferior and their neighborhoods as inherently criminal.⁷⁴

Despite high murder rates relative to other major cities, about 98% of all crimes in Houston in the 1950s were property-related crimes, and these tended to occur closer to the city's core on main drags with many businesses. Thus, higher rates of certain crimes would prevail closer to inner city neighborhoods.⁷⁵ But policing was not a mechanism used for crime reduction or prevention; rather, it was a mechanism through which to maintain the social order of the city. Black folks who traversed spaces outside of their neighborhoods risked facing the police baton, and this was always a risk when traveling between Houston's black enclaves. In 1955, for example, a group of black teenagers traveling to Booker T. Washington High School (formerly Old Colored High) "were unceremoniously pulled from the Studewood bus by white policemen, and taken to the police station after a verbal clash with a bus driver over a seat." One teenage student had been riding in a front seat "when an 'off-duty' bus driver boarded the bus at Travis and Capitol" in downtown and demanded that the sixteen-year-old girl move because "he was white" and "did not want to sit beside a Negro." The young student, snarky and rebellious, refused, saying, "[T]here are no white people in the world, 'only pink ones.'" Moreover, she rebuked him for freeloading, noting that she was a paying customer and he was getting a free ride at her expense. After several more refusals, the driver recruited "three carloads" of police officers to enforce the Jim Crow code of public transit. The police officers, rash and brash, grabbed two fourteen-year-old boys off the bus who were asking for transfers, and when one teenage girl mocked them for arresting "two little boys" she "was pulled into the police car" with them and taken to the city jail. Whether the initial rebellious teenage girl had been removed is unclear, but the consequences nevertheless remained clear: black bodies in public space—even those of children—could be criminalized, regardless of their particular actions, for

being black. Black bodies, as black spaces, were subject, like the neighborhoods they lived in, to neglect, abuse, and criminalization.⁷⁶

Indeed, black residents suffered abuse by police officers only footsteps away from their own front doors. In one case, on an otherwise typical Wednesday morning, sixty-two-year-old Owens Posey, who lived on Polk Street on the northern fringes of Third Ward (in what is now East Downtown), was “beaten in front of his blacksmith shop,” which he operated at 1313 Nagle Street. The officer, P. W. Pierson, claimed Posey was arrested for “using abusive language” and denied that he ever beat the blacksmith. The officer resented the black neighborhood, viewing it as criminal and self-destructive, and promised to “clean” it up saying, “As long as winos are rolling dice and chasing each other up and down the street, I will be there. I’m going to clean him (Mr. Posey) out.” Pierson had long been fussing with Posey about letting “winos” loiter around his shop, and on that Wednesday morning, when Pierson ordered one of Posey’s workers to leave the premises at gunpoint, Posey approached him. While one community member, Anita Debose, who lived in Fourth Ward but whose husband owned a junk yard in Third Ward, agreed that the “winos” were a “disgrace,” others found the police response agitating. Posey’s sister, Bessie Mae Barrett, testified that she heard the officer threaten her brother, saying, “I ought to blow your head off,” and witnessed Pierson hit Posey in the head before “forcing him into the police car.” Barrett, who lived one block down on Nagle, then recounted seeing Pierson “get in the backseat with her relative, and... beat him, as the car drove off.” After being released, Posey “was hospitalized for two days,” enduring a stroke that “affected his speech.” Pierson denied the allegations. The public abuse of black Houstonians on the inner core’s urban streets was not an uncommon sight. However, police brutality was not restricted to public

spaces, nor was it limited to urban environs, and neither was it only practiced upon the poorest, most vulnerable black Americans.⁷⁷

The rural dwellers of Acres Homes and the all-residential Pleasantville suburbanites noted that police officers effectively criminalized their spaces, even though their neighborhoods did not suffer crime levels like those in Fifth Ward or downtown did. Keeping black people in their place, even when the spaces they lived in defied popular stereotypes about them, was paramount to the integrity of Jim Crow. Therefore, black spaces were always hazardous for black lives, and as sociologist Andrea Boyles explains, this was true “particularly as the police upheld, supported, and in many instances, inflicted brutality upon black [people] individually and collectively.”⁷⁸

Like the residents of those black urban enclaves, and despite being *bona fide* suburbanites, folks who lived in Clinton Park, Fidelity, and Pleasantville suffered the criminalization of their space and its manifestation through police harassment. Judson Robinson, Jr., son of a black real estate agent and precinct judge of Pleasantville, followed in his father’s footsteps and also served as precinct judge of Pleasantville beginning in 1967. Earlier, he served as a campaign staffer for the first black person, Hattie Mae White, elected to the HISD school board, and had served as a delegate with Christia Adair at the Texas Democratic Convention where both were denied seats, and also eventually became the first black city councilman in the city since Reconstruction in 1971. In 1958, the senior Robinson was still precinct judge, and the junior Robinson and his wife resided in the tri-community area. One night that year, after building a new addition to their house, he and his wife, Margerette Robinson, a nurse at the Veterans Hospital, hosted several friends for a party.⁷⁹ One of his neighbors, invited but too ill to attend, suddenly knocked on the door and warned the Robinsons that “there are policemen in your back yard.” Judson looked out of

the large picture window at the rear of his house, and “sure enough,” he remembered, “there are 3 policemen”⁸⁰:

And I said, “What are you doing?” And they said, “Who are you?” I said, “I live here. This is my house. What do you want?” They said, “You want to be smart don’t you?” I said to myself, Uh-oh. I’m out here by myself. These guys will jump on me and say all kinds of things. I said, “Officer, if you think something is wrong, why don’t you come inside.” I figured if I got them in there, then I had a better of chance of them not jumping all over me. So he said, “You think you’re smart. Let me let you see what this flashlight feels like.” I said, “You don’t have to do that. Just come in and you can see.” Finally, I get them in. They’re 3 spies. One of them is just out for kicks. He wasn’t even a policeman.... Now these policemen are inside. My brother just finished law school... We asked them what was wrong. Well, here are these officers sitting there: “We’re going to arrest you all for consuming liquor after hours.” I said, “But, sir, I’m in my house.” He said, “I don’t care. It’s against the law.” My brother said, “No, it isn’t. I’m a lawyer.” So anyway, they called the sergeant. The sergeant comes out, he sees what’s going on, he recognizes that my father is the precinct judge, and stuff like that. He tried to smooth it over.... So we go to council, and they suspend all the guys for five days each. My wife and I lived in fear for six months.... They would call every night and say, “Nigger, I’m gonna get you tonight. I’m gonna get you.” I’d be afraid to go out my house. So I know what it is. I’ve had the abuse and things.⁸¹

When asked how black Houstonians felt about the police, Robinson answered, “...if you asked the average black person what he thought of the police department, they’d always tell you the same thing. They oppress us. They’re mean. They’re here to keep us under control.” Moments like these in the tri-community area demonstrated that even those black areas of Houston that did not look or feel like inner city slums and that did not see high rates of crime remained vulnerable to abuses by white police officers who exerted racial and institutional authority over the segregated black population. Keeping black people under “control,” then, had little to do with actual crime rates or any of its neighborhood or educational covariates. Criminality and inferiority were inherent in blackness in this white imaginary, and thus black people should always be subject to white control.⁸²

Anna Dupree, an entrepreneur and philanthropist, understood that whatever statistics might confirm for white Americans that black folks were prone to criminality and

deserved surveillance, the problems that plagued black communities were the result of larger structural forces. Dupree had been born in rural Texas as the granddaughter of freedpeople. In Houston, as she amassed a fortune through her beauty empire and other business ventures with her husband Clarence Dupree, she donated heavily to black communities. In the 1950s and 1960s, Our African American Community Council (OAACC) of Houston and Harris County, of which Anna was chairperson, developed a campaign to spread the “Truth” about black Americans’ contributions to the United States during Negro History Week and Memory Day (the fourth Sunday in June) to promote interracial “understanding” and anti-racism. They sought to remind the nation that, “These black hands helped build this giant southland,” but that those selfsame people were not given the opportunity to share in the South’s growing prosperity. The goals of Memory Day directly reflected the anxieties people like Anna had about black people being stereotyped and misunderstood—about the collective amnesia and willful sightlessness white people seemed to have regarding the historical and contemporary conditions that condemned black people to blight and overexposed them to crime. They remarked on the “1,500 illegitimate Negro children” born in Houston and Harris County each year, who typified the local black population that was often “homeless, uncared for and unloved, left to make their own way at an age when most youngsters are learning that life is worth living.” They tired of the city’s neglect of these indigent youths and their subsequent criminalization, pointing out the pipeline from homelessness, to underpaid labor, to crime, and to imprisonment: “These are the homeless Negroes who came before ‘Social Security’—those whose loyal devoted and cheap labor who helped buil[d] a giant America, those who are now the unneeded, unwanted ‘spoils’ of yesteryear.” Anna and the AACC chided the city: “Houston being entitled as the ‘Murder Capitol’ of the world is because of a major factor in crime and low

morals and the shameful neglect of Negro children.” They demanded food, shelter, and clothing for destitute black folks, for while six organizations provided these resources for white children—three of them administered by the county—none existed for black Houstonians.⁸³

A cres Homes, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards, the Pleasantville-Clinton Park area, and Sunnyside thereby reveal the ways the racialization of space as “black” could reinforce negative ideas about black people. Despite their differences, these “black spaces” emerged from similar forces of abuse and neglect, including white flight, resource segregation, underbunding, unscrupulous eminent domain practices, environmental racism, and criminalization. These residents suffered the effects of these, losing out on opportunities to build wealth and dispel myths about blackness.

Following World War II, Americans learned to conflate property ownership with whiteness, and thus saw white middle-class ascendancy as merited based on individual hard work and black poverty and segregation as a consequence of black folks' individual and cultural failings. Through the middle of the century, black Houstonians struggled against these ideological and material impositions. They developed, among themselves and in conversation with white Houstonians, visions for the city's future with regard to race. They believed—with each win the NAACP earned in court and with each editorial and political cartoon that exposed America's failure to embody its alleged democratic ideals vis-à-vis the atrocities of Nazi Germany—that they were on the precipice of change. Moreover, despite the ways that black space functioned in Houston, they often lauded their city as an outlier in the South, led by progressive businesspeople rather than ravenous mobs. Eventually, they believed, Houston would become a raceless city, where individual merit rather than color

determined a person's social location. Even as Houston's Jim Crow system fell away over the course of the 1950s and 1960s, however, residential segregation remained, and black space continued to limit the life chances of black people.

Notes

¹ Kevin Kruse notes that white Atlantans feared "interracial intimacy," a decline in morality, "black criminality," and the spread of diseases, which they argued inevitably befell "all large integrated cities." Thomas Sugrue highlights white Detroiters' anxieties, particularly their beliefs that "proximity to black [people] threatened the identity" of white neighborhoods, that black people depreciated home values, and that "black urban crime" precipitated neighborhood blight. Likewise, in Philadelphia, white folks came to associate black criminality, and specifically black women's sex work, with "that which many whites found wholly objectionable about city life," argues historian Kali Gross. Cynthia Blair's work highlights that the same was true in Chicago. In Baltimore, Samuel Roberts finds that white citizens viewed black urbanites as "archcarrier[s] of disease germs to white people," and thus vigorously supported efforts to maintain residential segregation. Khalil Gibran Muhammad's work confirms these fears across a swath of northern cities, including Cleveland and New York City, where each of these fears fed into an "urban crime discourse" that configured black people as both urban and criminal in white imaginaries. Kruse, *White Flight*, 10, 119, 123, 263; Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964," *Journal of American History* 82, no. 2 (September 1, 1995): 78-79, 227, doi:10.2307/2082186; Kali N. Gross, *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880-1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 111-12; Cynthia M Blair, *I've Got to Make My Livin': Black Women's Sex Work in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010), 284; Samuel Roberts, *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effects of Segregation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 161; Khalil Gibran Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 10; Dan T. Carter, *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*, 2nd ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 378 (second quote); Eric Avila, *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), 52 (third quote). See also: Nancy Perry, Spencer Crew, and Nigel M. Waters, "'We Didn't Have Any Other Place to Live': Residential Patterns in Segregated Arlington County, Virginia," *Southeastern Geographer* 53, no. 4 (December 7, 2013): 403-27, doi:10.1353/sgo.2013.0031. Underbounding describes the practice of cities to discriminate against annexing certain adjacent territories—a frequently racialized practice that resulted in predominantly black communities being excluded from the benefits of annexation. Charles S. Aiken, "Race as a Factor in Municipal Underbounding," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, no. 4 (1987): 564-79.

² Heather Ann Thompson's masterful research is the only work that explicitly connects conceptions of the racialization of crime, the racialization of space, and the criminalization of space in the ways my dissertation suggests are crucial. She acknowledges the force of racialized criminal justice during the post-War decades, long before the infamous conservative backlash that characterized the Nixon and Reagan years. However, her work really climaxes when she reaches the 1970s War on Drugs and, hence, the 1980s as the moment when the carceral state takes shape. Additionally, her early work, which looks most intently at New York and the relationship between mass incarceration, the decline in labor movements, and white flight to explain how racial inequality was perpetuated in the city, perpetuates the urban-suburban dichotomy, because in her study it was "urban" New York that became synonymous with blackness, poverty, crime, and disorder. Thus, she argues that in order to understand the crisis of urban poverty, scholars must learn more about mass incarceration after the 1960s. While Thompson and

Elizabeth Hinton are the only scholars who explicitly discusses the “criminalization of space,” that space is often qualified as “urban,” and hence, I believe, does not account for the fact that urban white Houstonians did not operate with the same syllogisms as white suburbanites in the mid-Atlantic. Elizabeth Hinton’s recent monograph takes a more national focus, but still attends—and rightfully so given her focus on federal crime policy—to the correlation contemporaries saw between “black urban” spaces and crime. Heather Ann Thompson, “Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History,” *Journal of American History* 97, no. 3 (December 1, 2010): 703–34, doi:10.1093/jahist/97.3.703; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2016).

³ Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1998).

⁴ Sarah Deutsch, “Landscape of Enclaves: Race Relations in the West, 1865-1990,” in *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America’s Western Past*, ed. William Cronon and George A. Miles (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1993), 117.

⁵ Houston, for example, was not “urban” in the same ways that New Orleans or Philadelphia were. In the 1960s, sociologist Blair Justice described “geographical dispersion” as a “significant characteristic of the Negro community in Houston,” meaning that unlike the image of “black urban” space that had come to define black communities in Oakland and Chicago, black Houstonians did not occupy one large “ghetto” in the city’s core. Indeed, unlike other metropolitan areas, black Houstonians had multiple residential options away from the central business district—suburbs and unincorporated rural towns built specifically for black homebuyers. Yet, even there, the stigmatization of black space as undesirable, criminal, and prone to deterioration prevailed. Houston demonstrates how, in one metropolitan area, black people managed their social, economic, and civic lives in segregated urban, suburban, and rural spaces, and how, despite the material differences between those spaces, they all shared similar, deleterious relationships with the city. *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), 316; George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 160.

⁶ And unlike many of these studies, *Criminalizing Space* addresses the ways criminal justice plays a critical role in creating black spaces. For example, Norwood Andrews III demonstrates how, in the 1960s, white Americans became obsessed with protecting space as fears about crime reached a fever-pitch, but his dissertation, which focuses on prison reform, does not connect ideas about an emerging, modern carceral regime with residential segregation literatures. Likewise, David L. Sjoquist’s edited collection about the “Atlanta paradox” of increasing urban prosperity juxtaposed with intransigent urban poverty underscores the interconnectedness of residential segregation, the racialization of space despite class, and networks of concentrated poverty without attending much to the mechanism of racial control through criminal justice practices. Other studies of racialized space also stop short of studying criminal justice as central to the maintenance of racial segregation, focusing more often on the physical maintenance of space through the building of highways, the clearance of slums, and vigilante violence. Norwood Henry Andrews III, “Sunbelt Justice: Politics, the Professions, and the History of Sentencing and Corrections in Texas since 1968” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2007); Sjoquist, “The Atlanta Paradox: Introduction”; Mark A. Thompson, “Black-White Residential Segregation in Atlanta,” in *The Atlanta Paradox*, ed. David L. Sjoquist (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000), 88–115; Obie Clayton Jr. et al., “Racial Attitudes and Perceptions in Atlanta,” in *The Atlanta Paradox*, ed. David L. Sjoquist (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000), 59–87; Judith N. DeSena, *Protecting One’s Turf* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005); Gerald D. Suttles, *The Social Order of the Slum: Ethnicity and Territory in the Inner City* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968); Ronald H. Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Kruse, *White Flight*; Frederick F. Siegel, *The Future Once Happened Here: New York, D.C., L.A., and the Fate of America’s Big Cities* (New York: Free Press, 1997).

⁷ Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968).

⁸ David Freund challenges attempts by historians to disaggregate white people's racial reasoning from their material desires. Much of this historiographical conversation is bound up in attempts to understand how white racial identity transformed in the postwar era, where many white Southerners seemed to finally embrace a "colorblind" ethos—if only in word and not necessarily in deed. Dan T. Carter's seminal *Politics of Rage* chronicles the career of infamous Alabama governor George Wallace. Through the 1950s and 1960s, Carter argues, Wallace reinvigorated a waning conservatism by boldly injecting anti-black racial prejudice into discourses involving urban violence and so-called black criminality, "business progressivism," local control of schools, private property, and small government. These issues had become particularly meaningful to white conservatives, northern and southern, urban and new suburban, as a response to what appeared to be civil rights gains for black Americans and increasing government intrusion in white people's spaces in order to secure those gains for black folk. Carter's "white backlash" remains critical for scholarship on post-WWII conservatism. Several modifications to Carter's thesis have been made by social historians since Carter first published *Politics of Rage* in 1995. Joseph Crespino's thesis foregrounds the role of race in the new conservatism in Mississippi, pointing to the ways leaders "initiated a subtle and strategic accommodation to the demands of civil rights activists" that nevertheless "helped preserve the priorities of white elites..." Their capitulation to civil rights gains resulted in a colorblind conservative politicking that they were able to shop around the state and the nation, focusing acutely on issues of government encroachment while keeping an eye on the prize of maintaining white privilege and white immunity from addressing racial inequality. Importantly, Crespino illustrates the ways Christianity and anticommunism infused the new conservatism and complemented colorblind rhetoric in a way that helped the conservative backlash appear non-racist and intensely American, and hence, "morally" right. David M. P. Freund makes a more dramatic intervention to Carter's thesis. Studying the northern post-War metropolis, Freund argues that as early as the 1940s, white Americans' racial identities and racial politics "were undergoing a fundamental transformation." He maintains that "race did matter," and so discounts scholarship that argues against the significance of race in post-War conservatism. Instead, he contends that whiteness, as an identity construct, became defined by the ascendancy of the suburb, the birth of a new middle class, and white folks' growing investment "in new ideas about the relationship between race and property." Race and racism, he argues, were not "static," but evolving and adapting all the time, and that the biological racism of the 1910s was no longer the fulcrum of white supremacy/exclusivity by the 1960s. Freund's analysis emerges in the literature as a profoundly intersectional one, where white racial identity is also a class identity, and hence white racism cannot be understood in isolation from market-driven classism. Carter, *The Politics of Rage*, 11, 78; Joseph Crespino, *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 4, 81; David M. P. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Also see: Jill S. Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Ian Haney Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); Eduardo Bonilla-Silva and David Deitrich, "The Sweet Enchantment of Color-Blind Racism in Obamerica," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): 190–206.

⁹ Several historians have pointed out the ways urbanity and blackness came to be synonymous. Indeed, two remarkable studies on Compton have showed how the suburb came, over time, to be understood as "urban" because of its transition to a majority-black residential enclave. This, however, does not capture the history of Houston's black suburbs, many of which had never undergone racial transition and were not viewed as "urban." Emily E. Straus, *Death of a Suburban Dream: Race and Schools in Compton, California* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014); Lynette Parker, "Theorizing the Ghetto: The Intersection of Resources, Psychology, and Oppression in the Construction of Black Identity and Consciousness" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2013). Indeed, although historians have catalogued the negative conditions that defined black urban spaces as a result of white avoidance, neglect, and abuse, further local studies are warranted. Some scholars have started to recover the stories of black migrants as "pioneers" of early-twentieth century suburbia, and their work reveals how blackness and suburbia were not linked in contemporary imaginaries as blackness and urbanity came to be. Instead, predominantly black suburbs would often be seen as "urban," despite their marked differences from the city center. Andrew Wiese, *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 129.

¹⁰ Following C. Vann Woodward's 1955 *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, historians have sought to confirm or debunk the "Woodward thesis." *Strange Career* was more an extended essay than a historical monograph, and its central contention was that racism had a history—that it was not just a fact of human intergroup contact. In particular, Woodward argued that Jim Crow had origins, and that it was institutionalized in the late 1890s, about two decades after the end of Reconstruction. In that time, he explained with local examples, cities and states in the South wrestled with how they would rebuild southern society's social landscape. Across the region's urban spaces, they invariably settled on Jim Crow segregation, though each location approached that conclusion at different times and segregation always evinced local variants. Scholars responded with a flurry of research, some of which sustained Woodward's argument about the origins of Jim Crow, but others vigorously challenged it. Looking much more closely at local practices and laws, Howard Rabinowitz argued that segregation had existed well before the 1890s, and Richard Wade found evidence of residential segregation in the antebellum South. Still more scholars sought to understand the ideological origins of Jim Crow segregation, even if their chronologies did not comport entirely with the Woodward thesis. Joel Williamson suggested an economic split-market antagonism thesis and Jacquelyn Dowd Hall in *Revolt against Chivalry* highlighted the ways gender and sexuality within a white supremacist patriarchal context became symbolic sites of anxiety for white men who developed ways to constrain black men's, black women's, and white women's sexual freedoms. Recently, scholars have resigned that it is seemingly impossible to locate a singular temporal origin of Jim Crow, but the hard center of Woodward's argument—that racism needs to be historicized rather than taken for granted—stands. I agree with John Whitson Cell that historians have largely failed to meet Woodward on his own terms regarding his definition of Jim Crow's separate-but-equal doctrine as being formalized legal statutes recognized as constitutional at all levels of government. Jim Crow, indeed, had origins. Whether segregation preceded this particular articulation seems a moot question given Woodward's central argument. C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955); C. Vann Woodward, *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913: A History of the South* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981); C. Vann Woodward, *Thinking Back: The Perils of Writing History* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1987); Howard N. Rabinowitz, "From Exclusion to Segregation: Southern Race Relations, 1865-1890," *Journal of American History* 63, no. 2 (1976): 325-50, doi:10.2307/1899640; John Whitson Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 1, 2005): 1233-63, doi:10.2307/3660172; Joel Williamson, "The Separation of the Races," in *When Did Southern Segregation Begin?*, ed. John David Smith, 1st ed. (New York; Basingstoke: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 59-84; Joel Williamson, *A Rage for Order: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); Jay R. Mandle, *The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy after the Civil War* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1978); Richard C. Wade, *Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967).

¹¹ C. Vann Woodward argued that Jim Crow was a result of white people's "capitulation to racism," given that, as he understood it, they had at least three philosophies/traditions regarding race appealing to them in the aftermath of the Civil War: conservatism (pro-segregation), economic populism, and liberalism (anti-segregation). Howard Rabinowitz suggested a fourth and obvious alternative: absolute exclusion. In some southern cities, that model had been in place as soon as the Civil War ended, Rabinowitz demonstrated, although whether they were excluded from public health institutions, schools, and eventually streetcars seemed to vary by location and time. Indeed, the streetcar example, for August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, demonstrated that while segregation had been common in some places immediately after the Civil War, it had not necessarily remained consistently so through to the nineteenth century. Rather, segregation was hotly contested, was sometimes dismantled, and then later reemerged. Black political will, they suggested, could not be left out of the historiographical conversation. Rabinowitz followed their work, demonstrating that the solidification of the doctrine that would come to define *Plessy* and Jim Crow—"separate but equal"—was the result of Republican machinations, incoming "Redeemers," and black "acceptance." Rabinowitz suggests this acceptance was motivated by a number of factors: a lack of liberal white allies, racial hubris, economic pressures, and the possibility of exclusion. Thus, for Rabinowitz and many other scholars, Jim Crow depended on black accommodation to Jim Crow. Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*; Rabinowitz, "From Exclusion to Segregation"; August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, "A Strange Chapter in the Career of 'Jim Crow,'" in *The Black*

Community in Modern America, ed. August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, vol. 2 (New York: Antheneum, 1969), 14–19.

¹² As a result, many scholars often speak of two dichotomous black political traditions: “accommodationism” and “radicalism,” typified by Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois, respectively. (Though, as Louis Harlan points out, the chasm between Washington and Du Bois was not immediate and Du Bois initially lauded the “Atlanta Compromise”.) This need to recover the “agency” of oppressed groups is a response to a much earlier political histories, which often focused on the political action of white men at the expense of black people and women in general. However, it has also allowed for the proliferation of theses like Rabinowitz’s, where Jim Crow is framed as dependent upon black people’s acquiescence. Pure structuralists have been chided for what appears to be a disregard for the human will and the capacity for humans to effect change, while those who seek to recover “agency” have yet to reconcile the paradox wherein history is necessarily wrapped up in contingency, and therefore, human “agency” emerges as a consequence of environment and other structural forces. I agree with Margaret Archer that individuals act, but they do not exert what scholars call “agency”—connoting power that comes from within the individual to exert influence on the outside world. Such a division between the “human” and the environment is perhaps theoretical hubris. This is not to say that people do not effect change, but rather that social assemblages inform human development, that said development is contingent on place and time and constantly emergent, that the capacity for change is bound up in those contingencies, and that this does not diminish humanity, but rather maintains a disciplined historicization of human beliefs and actions. On theories of the duality of structure and agency, see: Margaret Scotford Archer, *Culture and Agency: The Place of Culture in Social Theory* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996); William H. Sewell, “A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation,” *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 1 (July 1, 1992): 1–29; James Messerschmidt, *Crime as Structured Action*; John C. Rodrigue, “Black Agency After Slavery,” in *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on Postbellum America*, ed. Thomas J. Brown (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 40–65. On black political thought: Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Wizard of Tuskegee, 1901–1915* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983); Sid Bedingfield, “‘Beating down the Fear’: John H. McCray, Accommodationism and the Framing of the Civil Rights Struggle in South Carolina, 1940–1948” (M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 2010); John P. Flynn, “Booker T. Washington: Uncle Tom or Wooden Horse,” *Journal of Negro History* 54, no. 3 (July 1, 1969): 262–74, doi:10.2307/2716669; W. E. B. Du Bois et al., *African American Political Thought, 1890–1930: Washington, Du Bois, Garvey, and Randolph* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995); Cheryl Knott Malone, “Autonomy and Accommodation: Houston’s Colored Carnegie Library, 1907–1922,” *Libraries & Culture* 34, no. 2 (1999): 95–112; A. K. Sandoval-Strausz, “Travelers, Strangers, and Jim Crow: Law, Public Accommodations, and Civil Rights in America,” *Law and History Review* 23, no. 1 (April 1, 2005): 53–94.

¹³ Freedpeople established their first community institution, the Antioch Missionary Baptist Church, in 1866, and in 1868 found an inspiring leader in John Henry “Jack” Yates, also newly emancipated. Antioch Baptist Church still stands, although it is now severed from the official Fourth Ward and sits east of I-45 in downtown Houston, nestled beneath a skyscraper. Tomiko Meeks, “Freedmen’s Town, Texas: A Lesson in the Failure of Historic Preservation,” *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (2011): 42–44; Patricia Pando, “Two Worlds a Mile Apart: A Brief History of the Fourth Ward,” *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (2011): 37–41. Though Freedmen’s Town, Fourth Ward, and San Felipe District are often used as synecdoche for one another, these were, in the late nineteenth century, more distinct geographies than their usage today suggests. Freedmen’s Town was bordered to the north by Buffalo Bayou, to the south by San Felipe Road, and to the east by Houston’s city center—today’s central business district. Fourth Ward described a much larger political designation in the city’s governance structure. Into the early twentieth century, however, Fourth Ward became increasingly and predominantly black, and the distinctions that had existed between the Ward and Freedmen’s Town and the black business district along San Felipe Road in many ways became illegible. On the early boundaries of Freedmen’s Town, see Passey, “Freedmantown,” ix–xii.

¹⁴ Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 24–25; Tyina Steptoe, *Houston Bound: Culture and Color in a Jim Crow City* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015). Some students attended Gregory School “barefooted” from the Reconstruction era through at least the Great Depression, but despite their economic struggles and the segregated status of the school, many remembered it fondly. They recalled having recess in the front yard of the building, wrapping a pole in colorful ribbons during May Day celebrations,

attending Halloween events where they bobbed for apples and donned costumes, and putting on Christmas pageants for the community. "I loved Gregory," former student Paulette Williams Grant recalled. "Gregory is the reason I succeeded in life because they gave me the basic foundation from the very beginning." But she also remembered that when she attended in the 1950s, Gregory Elementary, like black schools throughout the city, were highly neglected by the school board: "The books that we had were the books that the white schools were throwing away, so we never had new books, but surprisingly enough many of us succeeded and went on to have wonderful careers and wonderful lives and I attribute that to the teachers. It had to be the teachers." Hardy Anderson, interview by Nicolás Castellanos, January 13, 2010, Gregory School Oral Histories, African American Library at the Gregory School, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/gsinterview/id/2/rec/6>; Paulette Grant, interview by David Goldstein, June 30, 2008, Houston Oral History Project, Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/oralhistory/id/77/rec/12>; Doris Peavy, interview by Nicolás Castellanos, February 26, 2010, Gregory School Oral Histories, African American Library at the Gregory School, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/gsinterview/id/29/rec/1>.

- ¹⁵ Pando, "Two Worlds a Mile Apart: A Brief History of the Fourth Ward," 41; Meeks, "Freedmen's Town, Texas: A Lesson in the Failure of Historic Preservation," 42.
- ¹⁶ On Houston's libraries see Cheryl Knott Malone, "Unannounced and Unexpected: The Desegregation of Houston Public Library in the Early 1950s," *Library Trends* 55, no. 3 (2007): 665–74, doi:10.1353/lib.2007.0015; Malone, "Autonomy and Accommodation: Houston's Colored Carnegie Library, 1907–1922"; "Houston's Carnegie Libraries," *Arch-Ive.org*, accessed May 5, 2016, <http://archive.org/archive/carnegie-houston/>; on Union Hospital see "To Bear Fruit For Our Race: History of Houston's African-American Physicians," *Department of History at the University of Houston*, accessed May 5, 2016, http://www.history.uh.edu/cph/tobearfruit/story_1900-1926_section08.html; Nancy C. Curtis, *Black Heritage Sites: The South* (New York: New Press, 1998), 281; "A Fourth Ward Overview," *Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston*, Winter 1984. Historian Cary D. Wintz provides an overview of Fourth Ward's cultural history at "Fourth Ward, Houston," *The Handbook of Texas*, *The Handbook of Texas Online* | *Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, accessed May 5, 2016, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hpf01>.
- ¹⁷ Martha Whiting, interview by Nicolás Castellanos, December 21, 2009, Gregory School Oral Histories, African American Library at the Gregory School, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/ref/collection/gsinterview/id/14>; Patricia Smith Prather, *In Search of Old Colored High*, n.d.
- ¹⁸ Barry J. Kaplan, "Race, Income, and Ethnicity: Residential Change in a Houston Community, 1920–1970," *Houston History Magazine* (Winter 1981): 178–202; Alan Ehrenhalt, *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), 165; David G. McComb, *The City in Texas: A History* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015), 240; and, on Ward population data, see Howard Beeth and Cary D. Wintz, *Black Dixie: Afro-Texan History and Culture in Houston* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 23.
- ¹⁹ C. F. Richardson, "Houston's Colored Citizens: Activities and Conditions Among the Negro Population," in *Civics for Houston*, vol. 1, 1929, 14; Tommy Stringer, "Joseph Stephen Cullinan: Pioneer in Texas Oil," *East Texas Historical Journal* 19, no. 2 (1981): 43–59; Ezell Wilson, "Third Ward, Steeped in Tradition of Self-Reliance and Achievement," *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 31–35; Demond Fernandez, "City Leaders Announce Plans to Renovate Historic Emancipation Park," *ABC13 Houston*, June 19, 2012, <http://abc13.com/archive/8707001/>; Benjamin van Loon, "On the Boards: Emancipation Park," *Green Building and Design*, June 2014, <http://gbdmagazine.com/2014/27-freelon-group/>; "\$33 Million Emancipation Park Renovation Project Will Celebrate the History of Oldest Park in the City of Houston [Press Release]," October 25, 2013, <http://www.houstongovnewsroom.org/go/doc/2155/1938841/-33-Million-Emancipation-Park-Renovation-Project-Will-Celebrate-the-History-of-Oldest-Park-in-the-City-of-Houston>; Allan Turner, "Houston's Antioch Church Celebrates 150th Anniversary," *Houston Chronicle*, January 24, 2016, <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/houston-texas/houston/article/Houston-s->

Antioch-Church-celebrates-150th-6781202.php; Pruitt, *The Other Great Migration*, 100; Beeth and Wintz, *Black Dixie*, 25.

- ²⁰ William Broyles, "The Making of Barbara Jordan," *Texas Monthly*, October 1976, 129; Steptoe, *Houston Bound*, 162; Donald P. Lee, interview by Beatrice Mitchell, May 15, 2008, Houston Arts and Media Oral Histories. MS 524, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ²¹ "St. John Enters New Home," *Houston Informer*, June 4, 1921, 4; The Red Book of Houston: A Compendium of Social, Professional, Religious, Educational and Industrial Interests of Houston's Colored Population (Houston: Sotex Publishing Company, 1915), <http://archive.org/details/redbookofhouston00sote>; Lee, interview.
- ²² Lee, interview.
- ²³ Ibid.; Annabelle McMillon, interview by Beatrice Mitchell, May 28, 2008, Houston Arts and Media Oral Histories. MS 524, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ²⁴ John Minton, "Houston Creoles and Zydeco: The Emergence of an African American Urban Popular Style," in *Ramblin' on My Mind: New Perspectives on the Blues*, ed. David Evans (University of Illinois Press, 2008), 365 (first quote); Alan B. Govenar, *Lightnin' Hopkins: His Life and Blues* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2010), 34 (second and third quotes); Roger Wood and James Fraher, *Down in Houston: Bayou City Blues* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 75 (fourth quote).
- ²⁵ Quoted in Wood and Fraher, *Down in Houston*, 75.
- ²⁶ "Howling on Dowling," Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston, Winter 2005, 15.
- ²⁷ Diana J. Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston," *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 12, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hpfhk>; Patricia Pando, "In the Nickel, Houston's Fifth Ward," *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 3 (2011): 33–37; Dave Shafer, "Looking Back Wards," *City Savvy* 13, no. 1 (2008), http://www.houstontx.gov/savvy/archives/win08/win08_heritage.htm; *Houston: A History and Guide* (Houston: Anson Jones Press, 1942); Marion Merseburger, "A Political History of Houston, Texas, During the Reconstruction Period as Recorded by the Press: 1868-1873" (M.A. Thesis, Rice Institute, 1950).
- ²⁸ *Houston: A History and Guide*, 89 (first quote), 93 (second and third quotes); "Projected Work," *Engineering-Contracting* 32, no. 1 (July 7, 1909): 33; *M. K. T. Ry. Co. v. Magee*, 32 Tex. 616 (Supreme Court of Texas 1899); B. H. Carroll Jr., ed., *Standard History of Houston Texas: From a Study of the Original Sources* (Knoxville: H.W. Crew & Co., 1912); Shafer, "Looking Back Wards"; Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston."
- ²⁹ Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston"; "Our History," *Mt Vernon United Methodist Church - Houston, TX The People's Church Since 1865*, n.d., <http://www.mtvernonhou.org/>.
- ³⁰ Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston"; David M. Bernstein, *Southern Pacific Railroad in Eastern Texas* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011), 25; Tyina Leaneice Steptoe, "Dixie West: Race, Migration, and the Color Lines in Jim Crow Houston" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2008); Robert E. Zeigler, "The Working Man in Houston, Texas, 1865-1915" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1972), 20, 52, 60–61.
- ³¹ Pando, "In the Nickel, Houston's Fifth Ward," 34 (first quote); Steptoe, "Dixie West," 182 (second quote); Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston." For an engaging, lively exploration of the intercultural conflicts (and understandings) between Houston's black Fifth Warders and the newcomers from Louisiana, see Steptoe's monograph: *Houston Bound*.
- ³² "Govt Indicts L W Dickerson," *Houston Informer*, April 21, 1956, sec. 1, 1; Kleiner, "Fifth Ward, Houston."
- ³³ "Historical Marker Detail for Acres Homes Community," *Harris County Historical Commission*, n.d., <http://www.historicalcommission.hctx.net/markerDetail.aspx?marker=9531>; Marvin D. Cloud, "Acres Homes: Largest U.S. 'Negro' Community Receives Official Texas Historical Marker," *African American News & Issues*, November 4, 2009, 1, box 1, folder 3, Linda Austin Collection MSS.0024, African American Library [hereinafter AAL] at the Gregory School, Houston Public Library [hereinafter HPL]; Debra Blackflock-Sloan, "The Harris County Historical Commission Welcomes You to the Dedication of an

Official Texas Historical Marker for Acres Homes Community,” November 7, 2009, box 1, folder 4, Linda Austin Collection MSS.0024, AAL at the Gregory School, HPL; Cloud, “Acres Homes: Largest U.S. ‘Negro’ Community Receives Official Texas Historical Marker,” 1; “Acres Homes: Profile Of A Negro Suburban Area,” *Houston Informer*, February 25, 1950, 19 (Grabeneimer quote). Citations may include various spellings of Acres Homes, including Acres Home (singular) and Acres Homes. These are not typos, and reflect, I believe, the ways the name of the community morphed through folkways. On black migration to Houston, see Pruitt, *The Other Great Migration*.

³⁴ Like other subdivisions marketed to black communities, and unlike those white neighborhoods discussed in the next chapter, Acres Homes was not master-planned for modern conveniences. According to the *Informer*, in 1950 it remained devoid of a central water system, a police force, sewage, and a fire department, and its roads stayed unpaved except for West Montgomery and West Little York. The residents there made do, developing their own system of manual and electric automatic pumps to provide for daily water needs. “Growth of Acres Homes Area Depends On Alertness Of Citizens To Its Needs,” *Houston Informer*, May 26, 1951, 1, 8; “Acres Homes: Profile Of A Negro Suburban Area,” 19. The spelling “Acres” appears in the *Informer*.

³⁵ Blackflock-Sloan, “The Harris County Historical Commission Welcomes You to the Dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker for Acres Homes Community.” The *Negro Life* magazine article was reprinted in Cloud, “Acres Homes: Largest U.S. ‘Negro’ Community Receives Official Texas Historical Marker,” 1, 3.

³⁶ Cloud, “Acres Homes: Largest U.S. ‘Negro’ Community Receives Official Texas Historical Marker,” 1, 13; Doris Elaine Childress, “Bus Ride to Liberation: A Historical Video Documentary of the Acres Homes Transit Company in Houston, Texas” (Denton, Texas, n.d.), 6, UNT Digital Library, <http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc279071/>. For example, working black folk in Acres Homes took the Yale Street Bus Line, operated by the Pioneer Bus Company, into Houston to work throughout the week, until 1958. That year, a long-standing, fractious relationship between the bus riders from Acres Homes and the bus company had finally ruptured. At the beginning of July 1952, Acres Homes residents had effectively established the seeds of a boycott of the bus line after the company raised fares so that a one-day round trip cost passengers seventy cents. This amounted to about ten percent of an average black family’s weekly income, presuming only one member of the household took the bus to work. In addition to avoiding what they felt were unreasonable prices, many black residents of Acres Homes decided to patron black-owned jitney services to get to and from work to avoid the indignities of segregation practices on Pioneer buses. Led by local minister J. B. Brooks, residents officially voted on July 16th of that year to boycott the Yale Line and instead used the jitneys, essentially illegal ride-sharing cars, to pressure the bus company to lower its prices. Together, they also submitted a formal petition to Larry Rush, manager of the Yale bus line. Competition between the bus company and the jitneys continued throughout the decade, and in December 1958, citing revenue losses, Rush canceled the Yale line to Acres Homes without warning.

Lacking any bus or streetcar service to the rural community, Acres Homes residents made it into the city through the use of those jitneys as a stop-gap, but their full vision included the creation of their own bus line. The jitneys could neither meet the demand of the large community, nor were they always convenient. Trips could be interrupted by Houston police officers who arrested and charged drivers “with operating public conveyances without a license.” With the help of the Harris County Council of Organizations (HCCO) and the local Baptist Ministers Association, and after successfully petitioning Houston City Council for a charter, the people of Acres Homes established the Acres Homes Transit Company (AHTC)—the first black-owned bus company in the South. The service ran from July 1959 until 1968. The residents of Acres Homes financed and incorporated the AHTC, “allowing patrons to participate as shareholders” and received dividends for company profits, and within just a few months had seven buses and twelve drivers taking them to and from Houston. The successful incorporation of the company cut riders’ weekly commuting costs by sixty-four percent. *Ibid.*, 6–7; Roger Townsend Ward, “Acres Homes Transit Company,” *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), December 17, 2015, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/dgama>; “Acres Homes Citizens Retain Attorney In Transportation Case,” *Houston Informer*, July 26, 1952, 10 (quote); “Two Bus Lines In Acres Homes Cause Tension,” *Houston Informer*, August 15, 1959, sec. 1, 1; Ninian McGowan, “Residents

Of Acres Homes May Soon Have Bus Service: Community Leaders Apply For Franchise,” *Houston Informer*, March 7, 1959, I, 10 (quote). According to the Census Bureau, the average income for a black household in 1950 was about \$1,869, and therefore a weekly income of about \$36. Assuming a five-day work week and no need for more than one round-trip per day into Houston, transportation cost commuting workers \$3.50 per week, about ten percent of a \$36 weekly income. “Current Population Reports: Consumer Income” (U.S. Department of Commerce and U.S. Bureau of the Census, March 25, 1952), <https://www2.census.gov/prod2/popscan/p60-009.pdf>; Thomas Snyder and Linda Schafer, “Youth Indicators, 1996” (U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 1996), <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/yi/youth.pdf>; Daniel Guérin, *Negroes on the March: A Frenchman’s Report on the American Negro Struggle* (New York: Weissman, 1956), 86. On Acres Homes bus history, see Childress, “Bus Ride to Liberation: A Historical Video Documentary of the Acres Homes Transit Company in Houston, Texas”; Ward, “Acres Homes Transit Company.” On the daily price of riding from Acres Homes to a job in the city of Houston, see “Acres Homes Citizens Retain Attorney In Transportation Case,” 10. On the beginnings of the boycott, see “Acres Home Citizens Boycott Yale Transportation,” *Houston Informer*, July 19, 1952, sec. I, I.

³⁷ Cloud, “Acres Homes: Largest U.S. ‘Negro’ Community Receives Official Texas Historical Marker,” I; “Acres Homes: Profile Of A Negro Suburban Area,” 19.

³⁸ Paul Alejandro Levengood, “For the Duration and Beyond: World War II and the Creation of Modern Houston, Texas” (Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 1999), 377; “History | 75 Years in the Making...,” *Clinton Park*, n.d., <http://clintonpark.org/index.php/history/>; Jim Mousner, “Negro Suburbia: The Most Compelling Reason Is Clear: ‘I Want a Home of My Own,’” *Houston Post*, February 22, 1959, sec. Suburbia, part 2, 9; “Tex. City FHA Builds ‘Homes Project,’” *Indianapolis Record*, July 7, 1945, 2 edition, 27, Hoosier State Chronicles: Indiana’s Digital Historic Newspaper Program. C. E. King resided at 2012 Rice Boulevard. *Study and Investigation of Housing: Hearings before the Joint Committee on Housing Eightieth Congress, First Session* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948), 1571. Profiting off of segregated black housing development was characteristic of white investors. Jim Crow limited the housing stock available to black people, creating artificially high demand for what was often substandard housing. Landlords could earn exorbitant profits from charging high rents to black people. Then, under the FHA, developers found that they could make fast money off of their investments by taking advantage of federal funds earmarked for housing developments that encouraged home ownership. Federal guidelines, however, prohibited the government from underwriting mortgages in neighborhoods that were potentially unstable—namely, those that might experience “possible infiltration by inharmonious racial groups.” Thus, the housing development projects that emerged in the middle of the century, from Clinton Park to Levittown, made clear that the homes could only be bought and occupied by members of one racial group—usually white. Federal Housing Administration, “Underwriting Manual: Underwriting and Valuation Procedure Under Title II of the National Housing Act, Rev. April 1, 1936,” *Urban Oasis*, n.d., <http://urbanoasis.org/projects/fha/FHAUnderwritingManualPtI.html>. On the profitability of Jim Crow housing, see Chapter I in Connolly, *A World More Concrete*.

³⁹ Levengood, “For the Duration and Beyond,” 377; “History | 75 Years in the Making...”; “Tex. City FHA Builds ‘Homes Project,’” 27; *Clinton Park Development Company v. Commissioner*, 11 T.C.M. 768 (United States Tax Court 1952); Mousner, “Negro Suburbia: The Most Compelling Reason Is Clear: ‘I Want a Home of My Own,’” 9; Wiese, *Places of Their Own*.

⁴⁰ “Tex. City FHA Builds ‘Homes Project,’” 27; *Clinton Park Development Company v. Commissioner*, 11 T.C.M.; “Houston Trains 12 as Firemen,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, November 1, 1958, 39; Mousner, “Negro Suburbia: The Most Compelling Reason Is Clear: ‘I Want a Home of My Own,’” 9. Although “the Negro smoke-eaters” would work at “all-Negro station[s],” they would nevertheless “answer fire alarms and calls in any community in the immediate area” including the “three white areas and scores of industrial establishments nearby.” “Houston To Hire Negro Firefighters,” *San Antonio Register*, August 12, 1955, I.

⁴¹ “Tex. City FHA Builds ‘Homes Project,’” 27.

⁴² *Ibid.*

⁴³ Pruitt, *The Other Great Migration*, 169; Dwight Watson, *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990: A Change Did Come* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005), 165n103; Mousner, “Negro

Suburbia: The Most Compelling Reason Is Clear: 'I Want a Home of My Own,'" 9. Pleasantville was one of the oldest majority-black suburbs of Houston, managed and maintained by its residents rather than the city. However, in the 1940s, during an explosive period of annexation, Pleasantville became a part of the city limits of Houston and Clinton Park followed in 1950. Like the rest of the tri-community, Pleasantville residents organized community groups and civic organizations that worked toward the improvement of the quality of life in their neighborhood, often meeting at local churches. In 1958, for example they succeeded in convincing the city to install ornamental light posts that would illuminate 1,217 blocks at night. They requested that all wiring for the lights be placed underground to preserve the aesthetic beauty of their neighborhood, and agreed to contribute \$20,000 to the project—"an average of \$27 per home." In 1952, Mayor Oscar Holcombe praised Pleasantville with the Houston Negro Chamber of Commerce for its "attractive" aesthetic quality, and urged developers to follow its model and build "[m]ore good Negro housing" in the city. "Street Light Installation Underway in Pleasantville," *Houston Informer*, April 5, 1958, 1, 8; City of Houston Planning & Development Department, "Annexations in Houston or How We Grew to 667 Square Miles in 175 Years," n.d.; "Housing for Negroes Needed, Speakers Say at Ceremony," *Houston Post*, October 19, 1952, sec. 4, 4.

⁴⁴ "Super Neighborhood 71 - Sunnyside," *City of Houston eGovernment Center*, accessed May 12, 2016, <http://www.houstontx.gov/superneighborhoods/71.html>; Karen D. Curry, "Sunnyside Update: A Health-Information Needs-Assessment" (Bellaire, Texas: Texas AHEC East - Greater Houston Region, 2012), 3, <http://www.ghahec.org/>; "Dear Sunnyside Community Residents [Houston Hope Newsletter]," December 12, 2007, <https://www.houstontx.gov/citizensnet/hope-sunnyside6.html>; Salatheia Bryant, "Group Revels in Sunnyside's Past," *Houston Chronicle*, August 18, 2004, <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Group-revels-in-Sunnyside-s-past-1975407.php>; Howard Jones, *The Red Diary: A Chronological History of Black Americans in Houston and Some Neighboring Harris County Communities—122 Years Later* (Austin: Nortex Press, 1991), 71; Robert H. Trimmer, interview by Beatrice Mitchell, July 28, 2008, Houston Arts and Media Oral Histories. MS 524, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

⁴⁵ "Chocolate Bayou Estates Site Of Lovely New Homes," *Houston Informer*, September 30, 1950, 2; "C Of C Surveys Chocolate Bayou," *Houston Informer*, February 17, 1951, 15; "C. Bayou Estates Civic Club To Give Tea," *Houston Informer*, February 16, 1952, 2.

⁴⁶ Rafael Longoria and Susan Rogers, "The Rurban Horseshoe," *Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston*, 2007, 19; Barrett Goldsmith, "Sunnyside Sees Future in Past," *Houston Chronicle*, August 25, 2005, <http://www.chron.com/news/article/Sunnyside-sees-future-in-past-1923261.php>; "The Jackie Robinson Story At Chocolate Bayou Drive In Sun," *Houston Informer*, June 18, 1955, 10.

⁴⁷ I transcribed the data from the 1950 U.S. Census Block Statistics records, created corresponding shapefiles in ArcGIS, and attached the data to those files in order to produce the map that corresponds to this paragraph. This time-consuming undertaking should be extended to the rest of Houston's neighborhoods, black, white, and Latino, to uncover other informative spatial patterns. *Census of Housing: 1950 (Taken as a Part of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States)*.

⁴⁸ Brian Spinks, "City's Heart Squeezed By Flight to Fringes," *Houston Post*, June 12, 1955, sec. 2, 4; Brian Spinks, "Self-Rule, Taxes, Home Prices, A-Age Spur Rush to Countryside," *Houston Post*, June 13, 1955, sec. 1, 10; Max Lerner, "The Cluster City," *Houston Post*, June 13, 1955, sec. Suburbia, 12-13; Mousner, "Negro Suburbia: The Most Compelling Reason Is Clear: 'I Want a Home of My Own,'" 9.

⁴⁹ Claudia Hazlewood, "Mykawa, TX," *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hnm76>; "Rumor of Planned 'Bombing' Sweeps Sunnyside," *Houston Informer*, June 17, 1950, 1.

⁵⁰ "Rumor of Planned 'Bombing' Sweeps Sunnyside," 1, 12. On an additional episode of racial tension in 1954 between white communities adjacent to the expanding black Sunnyside area, see Corrinne Stephenson Tsanoff, *Neighborhood Doorways: Neighborhood Centers Association of Houston and Harris County* (Houston: Neighborhood Centers Association of Houston and Harris County, 1958), 110-13.

⁵¹ "Homeowner Says Even Birds and Bees Segregate," *Houston Informer*, June 17, 1950, 1, 12; "Rumor of Planned 'Bombing' Sweeps Sunnyside," 1.

- ⁵² Unlike many Americans who lamented Chicago's blackness and the negative stereotypes concomitant with that image, Hubert had personal experience with urban Chicago—experience that perhaps pushed him to leave the Great Lakes region for more spacious pastures in the South. He was born in Illinois, raised in Chicago, and only had an eighth grade education. Both of his parents were born in Ohio, but all four of his grandparents had immigrated to the United States from Germany. During Hubert's childhood there, Chicago's black population ballooned, as did its reputation for vice and crime as the city's police and municipal authorities bullied and constrained the city's "Black Belt" away from the central business district, concentrating vice and poverty in the Chicago's Southside. Unlike many of the rural black folk who had migrated to Chicago, however, Hubert was afforded the opportunity to work in the upholstery trades since at least his early teens. This opportunity paid off; in Houston, he owned his own upholstery shop, and by 1940 also owned a farm and home on Mykawa Street valued at about \$7,000. "Homeowner Says Even Birds and Bees Segregate," 1, 12; "Rumor of Planned 'Bombing' Sweeps Sunnyside," 1, 12. I've gleaned this information about Hubert's background strictly from Census records, particularly one sheet from 1900 and another from 1940: "Twelfth Census of the United States (Enumeration District: 0449, Page 4B)" (Chicago Ward 14, Cook, Illinois, 1900), Publication No. T623; FHL Microfilm: 1240263, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://heritagequestonline.com>; "Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 (Enumeration District: 101-22A, Page 21A)" (Harris County, Texas, 1940), Publication No. T627_4054, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://heritagequestonline.com>. On Chicago, see Blair, *I've Got to Make My Livin'*; Jeffrey S. Adler, *First in Violence, Deepest in Dirt: Homicide in Chicago, 1875-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10312790>; William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (New York: Atheneum, 1970).
- ⁵³ "Civic Club Petitions Halt To Substandard Housing," *Houston Informer*, July 29, 1950, 1, 8; "Minnetex-Mykawa Group To See Health Dept.," *Houston Informer*, August 5, 1950, 1, 8.
- ⁵⁴ Vince Johnson, "Developer Backs City On Nickens," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, July 27, 1963, 11; Vince Johnson, "Home Values Rise With Negro Entry," *Toledo Blade*, February 21, 1960, 8; William Brower, "Housing Discrimination Causes Acute Problem for Negroes," *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, December 17, 1951, 1, 8; "Property Values, Negro Occupancy," *Houston Informer*, August 20, 1955, 16.
- ⁵⁵ "Texas Holds 43 Negroes for Murder," *Pittsburgh Post*, August 25, 1917.
- ⁵⁶ Martin V. Melosi and Joseph A. Pratt, *Energy Metropolis: An Environmental History of Houston and the Gulf Coast* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014), 214.
- ⁵⁷ Shane Ford, *Shine A Light: My Year with "Blind" Willie Johnson* (Self-published memoir, 2014), 67 (first and second quotes); David A. Williams, *Bricks Without Straw: A Comprehensive History of African Americans in Texas* (Austin: Eakin Press, 1997), (third quote); Steptoe, "Dixie West," 225 (fifth quote); James M. Salem, *The Late, Great Johnny Ace and the Transition from R & B to Rock "N" Roll* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 49 (sixth quote); Dana Cuff, "Mirrors of Power: Reflective Professionals in the Neighborhood," in *The Power of Geography: How Territory Shapes Social Life*, ed. Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear (New York: Routledge, 2014). Many cities shut down their vice districts in 1918 and 1919 in response to the high rates of venereal disease contracted and spread by soldiers. Karin L. Zipf, "In Defense of the Nation: Syphilis, North Carolina's 'Girl Problem,' and World War I," *The North Carolina Historical Review* 89, no. 3 (2012): 276–300.
- ⁵⁸ Zachary Montz, "The Battle for San Felipe: The Promise and Perils of Public Housing in Houston" (The Past and Present of Race and Place, Rice University, Houston, Texas, 2013), 1, 10; Cary D. Wintz, *Blacks in Houston* (Houston: Houston Center for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1982), 20.
- ⁵⁹ Montz, "The Battle for San Felipe: The Promise and Perils of Public Housing in Houston," 1, 10; Carolyn Elizabeth Whitsitt, "Caught in the Crossfire: Public Housing and Race in Houston" (M.A. Thesis, Stephen F. Austin State University, 2011), 28–29, <http://gradworks.umi.com/15/04/1504181.html>; Meeks, "Freedmen's Town, Texas: A Lesson in the Failure of Historic Preservation"; Wintz, *Blacks in Houston*, 24; "340 Vacancies In San Felipe Courts, But Negroes Kept Out," *Houston Informer*, May 19, 1956, sec. 1, 1.
- ⁶⁰ Whitsitt, "Caught in the Crossfire," 33.
- ⁶¹ Wintz, "Fourth Ward, Houston"; Steven Conn, *Americans against the City: Anti-Urbanism in the Twentieth*

Century (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 209; Meeks, "Freedmen's Town, Texas: A Lesson in the Failure of Historic Preservation," 43; Steven R. Strom, *Houston Lost and Unbuilt* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010), 23. Though the construction of I-45 was a boon for many communities between downtown Houston and Galveston, which Tom Watson McKinney explains in his dissertation, McKinney fails to address—at all—the effects of the Gulf Freeway on Fourth Ward and the city's black commercial life. See Tom Watson McKinney, "Superhighway Deluxe: Houston's Gulf Freeway" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 2006).

⁶² "Fifth Ward Readies For Highway 59," *Houston Informer*, December 6, 1952, sec. 1, 3; "Fifth Ward To Get New Housing Project," *Houston Informer*, September 27, 1952, sec. 1, 3; Jones, *The Red Diary*, 138; Lin, *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places*, E-book; Joe R. Feagin, *Free Enterprise City: Houston in Political-Economic Perspective* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1988), 248.

⁶³ Jones, *The Red Diary*, 138; Lin, *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places*; Feagin, *Free Enterprise City*, 248; Richard West, "Only the Strong Survive," *Texas Monthly*, February 1979, 175.

⁶⁴ Pando, "In the Nickel, Houston's Fifth Ward," 37 (first quote); Longoria and Rogers, "The Rurban Horseshoe"; "Citizens Gird For The Battle To Improve The Fifth Ward," *Houston Informer*, January 8, 1955, 1, 8; "Fifth Warders Blast City For 'Neglect,'" *Houston Informer*, January 15, 1955, 1, 8; "5th Ward Citizens League Set To Fight For Storm Sewer," *Houston Informer*, January 22, 1955, 3.

⁶⁵ "Fifth Warders Blast City For 'Neglect,'" 1, 8; "The Flooded Fifth Warders Angry," *Houston Informer*, January 22, 1955, 1. The United States ruled the Democratic Party's white-only primary unconstitutional in *Smith v. Allwright* in 1944. Prior to that, in states like Texas, where one party had monopolized political control of the state, black citizens had been effectively disenfranchised. As it were, Lonnie Smith, the plaintiff in the case, was a resident of Fifth Ward. Thelma Scott Bryant, interview by Patricia Smith Prather, August 3, 2007, Houston Oral History Project, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/oralhistory/id/93/rec/6>.

⁶⁶ Bullard, *Invisible Houston*, 36; "Fidelity Addition To Get City Water," *Houston Informer*, September 25, 1954, 20; "[Minutes Notebook]," November 23, 1953, November 30, 1953, March 26, 1956, May 25, 1959, box 1, folder 2, Helen G. Perry Family Collection MSS.0276, HMRC, HPL; "Cloverland Residents Complain To Mayor, City Fathers About Water Rates, Sts," *Houston Informer*, July 11, 1959, 10; "Contract For Trinity Gdns Sewers Let," *Houston Informer*, August 11, 1959, 10; "Negro Neighborhood Neglect," *Houston Informer*, November 8, 1958, 10.

⁶⁷ "Dear Sunnyside Community Residents [Houston Hope Newsletter]," March 11, 2008, <http://www.houstontx.gov/citizensnet/hope-sunnyside9.html>.

⁶⁸ Bryant, "Group Revels in Sunnyside's Past"; "Incinerator Still Not Opening," *Corpus Christi Times*, January 13, 1971, 15-C; John Suval, "Mixing It Up," *Houston Press*, May 10, 2001, <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/mixing-it-up-6562324>; Robert D. Bullard, "The Legacy of American Apartheid and Environmental Racism," *Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development* 9, no. 2 (1994): 458; "The Flooded Fifth Warders Angry," 1. Bullard's very important and critical argument is that the siting of environmental hazards in Houston's historical development has paid little attention to environmental science or social equity, and, instead, has depended on how space has been defined racially and economically: "The central theme of my analysis is that all communities are not created equal when it comes to the siting of locally unwanted land uses (LULUs) such as garbage dumps, landfills, and incinerators. Race and class dynamics, along with political disenfranchisement, interact to place some communities at special environmental health risks from waste facility siting. If a community happens to be poor, black, and powerless, it receives less environmental protection in the placement of LULUs than an affluent, white, and politically powerful community. Waste facility siting is not 'rocket science,' but is more political science. Quite often it is not hydrology, toxicology, or epidemiology but sociology that carries the greatest weight in siting LULUs." Robert D. Bullard, *Dumping In Dixie: Race, Class, And Environmental Quality*, Third Edition, 3rd ed. (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000), 208-09.

⁶⁹ It also provided city leaders with an opportunity to criminalize the minority workers there. Garbage workers, most of whom were "Negroes and Latin-Americans," adapted to these lurid conditions through supplementing their income by salvaging scraps from the Dump. The city quickly criminalized their

efforts. City council officials, like George Kessler and future mayor Louie Welch, worked to make this scavenging illegal. Already disgusted with the quality of life near the Dump, the *Informer* remarked, "Many Negroes are wondering if this isn't the time honored scheme of the newly elected officers to make themselves famous at the expense of a group that would hardly be in a position to defend themselves." The editorialists at the newspaper could not make sense out of the politicians' opposition to the salvaging in any other way. These enterprising workers were effectively reducing waste in ways that caused no harm to the Dump or to the city. Yet, their treasure hunts through garbage became marked as somehow deviant and criminal. "Citizens Come To Rescue Of 'Poor Garbage Men,'" *Houston Informer*, January 27, 1951, 8.

⁷⁰ "New Polio Epidemic Flares in Houston," *The American* [Odessa, Texas], November 15, 1946, 1; "Bellaire Residents Enraged By Newspaper Blast," *Southwestern Times* (Official Publication for the Cities of West University Place, Bellaire, and Southside Place), July 17, 1952, 1, 8; "Holmes Road Lounge," *Rice Thresher*, October 19, 1956, 4; Suval, "Mixing It Up" (Williams quote).

⁷¹ "Will Acres Homes Become All-Negro Town? Incorporation Pleas To Be Heard Monday," *Houston Informer*, August 17, 1957, 1, 10; Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations, *Fiscal Balance in the American Federal System*, vol. 2: Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities (Washington, DC: Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1967), 328. While it made fiscal sense for Houston to avoid annexing a town that would require such expensive efforts to improve the quality of life, it had actually "incurred additional public costs not entirely offset by the addition to its tax resources" when it annexed white subdivisions throughout contemporary decades. Indeed, in 1956 the city annexed "a number of water districts and private utilities for which the city paid \$10 million and assumed \$39 million of debt," leaving the city with an "annual deficit of \$1.5 million..." Ibid., 2: Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities:31; "Independent Offices and Department of Housing and Urban Development Appropriations for 1970. Part 4: Department of Housing and Urban Development; Testimony of Members of Congress and Other Individuals and Organizations" (91st Cong., 1st sess., 1969), 707; Kevin L. Glasper, "The Political, Economic & Social Implications of Mayor Lee P. Brown," in *Perspectives in Black Politics and Black Leadership*, ed. John Davis (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007), 103; Neal R. Peirce, *The Great Plains States of America: People, Politics, and Power in the Nine Great Plains States* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1973), 338.

⁷² "Will Acres Homes Become All-Negro Town? Incorporation Pleas To Be Heard Monday," 1, 10. In October 1957, in a "landslide," voters erased "the proposed city of Accra off the Harris County imaginary map," Acres Homes's proposed name-change an homage to the city in Ghana. Nearly nine out of every ten voters opposed incorporation, and surprised supporters, who "blamed" their defeat "on propaganda circulated by 'outside interests' who opposed incorporation on grounds that homeowners would be so heavily taxed they would lose their homes in sheriff's sales." Nelson lamented that Acres Homes's black voters still lacked the racial consciousness to view themselves as capable of self-governance. "Acres Homes Voters Rebuke Proposed All-Negro Town," *Houston Informer*, October 19, 1957, 3.

⁷³ Luther Wayne Capooth, *The History of the Millsaps* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1993), 31; "National Affairs: Houston's Shame," *Time*, July 2, 1928, 12; "Texas Holds 43 Negroes for Murder," 1, 4.

⁷⁴ At least one of these officers, Lee Sparks, had migrated after the Civil War, Steptoe explains, coming from Wharton and Fort Bend counties—Texas's "Sugar Bowl," where the abundant use of slave labor for the production of sugar and cotton had generated a particularly belligerent and violent strain of white supremacist culture. Steptoe, *Houston Bound*, 31. On the 1917 mutiny, see Robert V. Haynes, *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1976).

⁷⁵ Aggregate crime statistics for the city of Houston from 1950 through 1959 were provided to me by the Houston Police Department.

⁷⁶ "Cops Mishandle BTW Students," *Houston Informer*, April 2, 1955, sec. 1, 1, 10.

⁷⁷ "On Elgin Street," *Houston Informer*, July 10, 1954, sec. 1, 1; "Cop Denies Beating Prisoner," *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, sec. 1, 1, 12; "Fire Sweeps Neighborhood; 4 Houses Are Damaged," *Houston Informer*, April 2, 1955, sec. 1, 1.

⁷⁸ Andrea S. Boyles, *Race, Place, and Suburban Policing: Too Close for Comfort* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015), 22.

⁷⁹ Shawna D. Williams, "Robinson Judson Wilbur, Sr.," *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 17, 2013, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/froco>; Shawna D. Williams, "Robinson Judson Wilbur Jr.," *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), May 24, 2013, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/frobu>; Bernadette Pruitt, "For the Advancement of the Race: African-American Migration and Community Building in Houston, 1914-1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 2001), 337; "[Finding Aid]," n.d., box 1, folder 1, Judson Robinson, Sr., Family Collection MSS.0316, HMRC, HPL; Linda L. Black, "Female Community Leaders in Houston, Texas: A Study of the Education of Ima Hogg and Christia Daniels Adair" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2008), 176.

⁸⁰ Judson Robinson Jr., Robinson, Judson, interview by Florence Coleman, September 3, 1974, Houston Oral History Project, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/ref/collection/Interviews/id/249>.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Anna Dupree to Friend, September 23, 1963, box 1, folder 4, Anna Dupree Collection MSS.110, HMRC, HPL; "Our Purpose: Build a Better Community," n.d., box 1, folder 3, Anna Dupree Collection MSS.110, HMRC, HPL; "America's Future Rests Squarely Upon the Should[er]s of Our Youth," n.d., box 1, folder 3, Anna Dupree Collection MSS.110, HMRC, HPL.

CHAPTER 2: “WE WANT IN, NOT OUT”: ENVISIONING A RACELESS HOUSTON

Black Houstonians did not endure the indignities of white supremacy without protest. Since Clifton F. Richardson founded the *Houston Informer* in 1919 he used its pages to speak against Jim Crow and American hypocrisy. In the previous year, black Houstonians established their city’s branch of the NAACP.¹ Until the 1960s when student activism picked up, Houston’s civil rights leaders were generally middle class—editors, attorneys, and entrepreneurs. They often lauded Houston for its relatively smooth, if slow, transition away from Jim Crow customs through the 1950s and early 1960s.² Shaped by their belief in Houston as a city of racial tolerance, deeply affected by their personal biographies and gender subjectivities, and molded in particular ways by their commitment to liberal individualism, Houston’s black leaders worked toward fulfilling the vision of a city wherein race would not determine a person’s life chances.

The collective vision of Houston’s mainstream black leaders of what they sometimes called a “color blind” future was structured by at least three factors.³ First, as middling and middle-class women and men, socialized to believe in the possibilities of economic mobility afforded by American capitalism, they remained invested in the mythos of individual uplift, meritocracy, and democratic equality. Throughout the 1950s, Houston’s mainstream black civil rights activists publicly campaigned for their collective racial interests, but their calls for racial solidarity, they explained, were toward the end of securing equal opportunity and access for individuals, believing that each black individual’s success could undermine prejudice against the group. The group’s well-being was important insofar as racism

continued to limit the life chances of individuals within the group, but in a future without racism, individuals would be able to fend for themselves.⁴

Second, their sociopolitical vision took shape in the city of Houston. Houstonians, black and white, understood themselves as exceptional, and their city as an outlier to “the South” that they were regionally connected to. Texans had long understood themselves as special, and Houstonians perhaps believed they were even more divergent from stereotypical *southern-ness* than their fellow Texans. “Heavenly Houston” (see *Image 1*), as they called it, was a city of progress, a leader in business, arts, and race relations, they would often argue. It was the Chicago of tomorrow, the nation’s next great metropolis—a city where even black people could realize their dreams. Whether Houston’s uniqueness was real or imagined, mainstream black Houstonians shared with their white counterparts a perception that their city challenged what it meant to be of and to live in “the South.” If Houston could integrate its schools without one incident of mass violence, if white supremacist terrorists could be prosecuted and convicted in court by an all-white jury, and if economic interest could trump racial antipathies, then so too could Houston realize a future where color did not prescribe life outcomes. Black Houstonians witnessed a city that looked, sounded, and felt different than did tumultuous Little Rock, or, closer to home, battle-scarred Dallas. They lauded what they saw as their city’s relative propensity for civility and race-blind justice, and banked their vision for a raceless future on that perception.⁵

Lastly, Houston’s black civil rights leaders’ beliefs and strategies were also shaped by their gendered conceptions of themselves.⁶ Their gendered concerns, usually articulated in terms of manly courage and motherly responsibility, as opposed to masculinity versus femininity, compelled black Houstonians to work for a future in which their spouses and

children would not be subjected to the same social, economic, and political insults that had been lobbed at them. Indeed, while many gender theorists describe gender in the twentieth century United States in terms of masculinity and femininity, those two symbols and ways of “doing gender” were not the most salient when black Houstonians discussed their aspirations for a raceless future. Indeed, rather than embodying these oppositional gendered ways of being, black leaders worked to fulfill what they been taught were their gendered obligations to the “Negro race.”⁷ Black women like Houston NAACP Executive Secretary Christia Adair and school board member Hattie Mae White practiced what Alice Walker would later term “womanism.” Womanism is a performative politics and guiding ideology defined by black women’s understanding that their well-being was informed by the interconnectivity of their myriad identities as mothers, daughters, housewives, businesswomen, churchwomen, and so on. The work they completed for their communities was also work that they accomplished for themselves, for in fulfilling their “womanly” roles, they sustained the families, communities, and civic organizations that could reciprocally sustain them.⁸ Black men like Carter Wesley, publisher of the *Houston Informer*, expressed different concerns.⁹ He articulated his fight against Jim Crow as a black middle-class man, defining his manhood, not in opposition to femininity, but in opposition to the “cowardice” demanded of black men by white supremacy. His understanding of manly courage, informed by the traditional “masculine” value of rationality, shaped what he viewed as acceptable civil rights politics. Compelled by what they perceived as their gendered obligations, black Houstonians, then, entered into the dangerous work of forcing a Jim Crow city to confront its quotidian, structural, and legal racism. They did not always agree on tactics, but their prevailing commitment to liberal individualism helped them sustain, across their differences, the same hopes for the nation’s future.

"Heavenly Houston"

The Workshop of Texas, Where Seventeen Railroads Meet the Sea

Offers unexcelled industrial opportunities to the colored man.
Greatest cotton center in the South, the fleecy staple being exported via the Houston Ship Channel, being handled by colored longshoremen and screwmen.
Largest inland port cotton market in the world.
Oil center of the Southwest, being near the producing wells of Texas and Louisiana, employing hundreds of colored men.
Cottonseed center of the Southwest, all plants employing a large number of colored laborers.
Hargest primary rice market in the South, handling annually over 1,000,000 bags of rough rice, valued upwards of \$5,000,000.
Hargest primary market for the South, handling annually over 1,000,000 bags of rough rice, valued upwards of \$5,000,000.
Government recently appropriated money and county recently voted additional bonds to deepen the channel, which is our greatest natural asset, thereby making it (when the job is completed) without a parallel in the South and destined the city as the premier municipality of the South.
Wharf and terminal facilities owned by the city, constructed of reinforced concrete, late style rat-proof buildings, costing \$3,000,000. Free wharfage maintained. Two modern suction dredges, costing \$200,000 each.
Has one of the best water systems in America. Those who drink this excellent water are never anxious about leaving this city for any other, either of this world or of the world to come.
Is the convention city of the Southwest, possessing a City Auditorium built by the municipality at the cost of \$400,000 without issuing a single bond. It has a seating capacity of 5000 and can accommodate 10,000. It is fire-proof throughout and is often employed by colored churches, schools and other special occasions.
Has one of the best educational systems in the South for colored children, operating 16 elementary schools and the high school, employing about 150 teachers and super-numeraries.
Has more churches than any other city its size in America, practically all of the denominations being represented.
Gives all kinds of employment to colored men and women and has one of the greatest colored citizenry to be found anywhere in the world. More colored people own their homes, or are buying them, than in any other American city.
Has progressive colored physicians, dentists and other professional men. Has two colored hospitals, three secular newspapers and two religious publications.
Colored people are engaged in all avenues of business and some have made a very creditable showing.
The colored residents own three large brick buildings in the business area of the city, in a block adjacent to the City Hall.
Has the finest colored cotton goods market in the South.
Only city in the South that has a park maintained and supported by the city for the race; it is known as Emancipation Park, located in the residential section of the Third Ward.
One of the few Southern cities operating a home for delinquent girls of the race, as well as one for the boys. Maintains both male and female officers for incorrigible youths. Also employs a colored social service worker. Possesses a Young Women's Christian Association Recreational Center, settlement house and Young Men's Christian Association Center for returned soldiers and sailors.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION AND PARTICULARS, WRITE

LINCOLN LEAGUE OF AMERICA

HOUSTON BRANCH

HOUSTON - - - - - TEXAS

Image 1 "Heavenly Houston" ad presents the city as an attractive destination for black Americans looking for economic opportunities in the South. Printed in the Houston Informer, July 10, 1920, 7.

The differences in tactics and ideas among mainstream black leaders in the 1950s, however, points to a diversity of black political thought that reflected a lack of surety about whether Jim Crow would wither and what the aftermath might be. While many scholars have studied the ways white Americans responded to black citizens' civil rights gains in the 1950s and 1960s by turning against the Great Society and embracing an ardent "colorblind" individualism, the term "colorblind racism" fails to encourage interrogation into the nuances of Americans' changing understandings of race vis-à-vis their commitment to liberal individualism.¹⁰ Moreover, much of this literature focuses on white racial identity politics while it flattens the diverse ways black Americans approached the question of how to realize a raceless future. Like their white counterparts, in the post-War years preceding Jim Crow's demise, black Americans reimagined how to reconcile liberal individualism with racial identity and its ascribed values in American society.

Generally Houstonians evinced varying, sometimes overlapping, and oscillating allegiances to *color-rejecting*, *color-evasive*, *color-valuing*, and *color-aware* discourses—different notions of how to approach the problem of racial inequality in a changing society.¹¹ Color-rejection refers to those conscious efforts to complete anti-racist work with attention toward historical (dis)advantage. Color-aware leaders, offering a throwback to Garveyism's black nationalism and a prelude to black nationalist resurgence in the late 1960s, but not precisely mirroring either of those political developments, proposed that minority groups must be pragmatic by closing ranks and supporting in-group economic upward mobility even as they espoused a consciously non-separatist hope for the future. Color-valuing Houstonians maintained conscious and subconscious beliefs in the inherent biological, behavioral, or spiritual differences between racial groups. And, most similar to "colorblindness," color-evasion reflected conscious and subconscious efforts to maintain

that color did not and should not matter in correcting existing inequalities. At times antagonistic, these ideas converged on the issue of individualism in the cauldron of Cold War politics, which allowed Houstonians, black and white, to experiment with each of them when politically expedient as they worked out their visions for the city's racial future.

From her earliest activist days fighting corruption in the small town of Kingsville, Texas, Christia Adair practiced building interracial coalitions to address social ills. After moving to Houston, a larger city with a substantial business class and a reputation for racial tranquility to maintain, she developed a color-rejecting philosophy wherein she worked across racial lines to address problems of historical disadvantage that had proscribed black Americans' life chances. As executive secretary of the NAACP she rejected racial provincialisms and used her relationships, across color lines, to tackle longstanding inequalities, successfully "enlist[ing] the cooperation of the various denominational, civic, and political groups in the city," which reflected "her own fine spirit of cooperation." In the early 1950s, when she helped organize the Harris County Democrats, and later as the organization struggled with whether to support Hattie Mae White's bid to become a member of the Houston school board, she warned the organization's white members that they needed to "understand the aspirations, needs, hopes, and dreams of the black people of this community"—that without acknowledging and addressing racial discrimination explicitly, there was no political future for liberals.¹²

Carter Wesley's protests against racial inequality were more fluid—a reflection, perhaps, of his position as a newspaper publisher as opposed to Adair who, as a leader, remained accountable to the nation's foremost civil rights organization. He used the *Informer* to fight for what he believed was, at the given moment, the most pragmatic approach to addressing a particular issue. In the case of whether black Houstonians should

rally behind the establishment of Texas State University for Negroes—a school formed in order to prevent the integration of the University of Texas—Wesley argued against Thurgood Marshall and Lulu B. White, who demanded that Texas desegregate its flagship school rather than build a substandard one for black Americans. As president of the Southern Conference for Equalization of Educational Opportunities, Wesley argued that the NAACP could fight its desegregation battle concurrent with his organization's equalization fight. "My firm belief," he noted, "is that Negroes should ask for integration into the University of Texas or any other school where white [people] attend," but if white Americans "invoke their Constitution and their statutes and insist upon providing a separate school, then I believe Negroes should demand that they make it equal in every particular to any that they furnish to white [people] on the separating line." Marshall and White interpreted this as capitulation to white supremacy. Wesley repeatedly remarked that they misrepresented his position on the matter. His public and bitter conflicts with them, however, evinced his desire to realize a raceless future through means he deemed immediately pragmatic. Wesley's optimism regarding what he saw as the inevitable victory of black Americans in the fight for racial equality, however, often failed to live up to his expectations. Additionally, the liberal individualist commitments that undergirded his political philosophy sapped the strength of his structural critiques of racism, leaving space for Americans, liberal and conservative, to reconcile racial inequality with liberal individualism by invoking racialized discourses of criminality. That reconciliation ultimately helped white supremacists salvage what they could of a withering Jim Crow.¹³

Christia Adair grew up in Edna, Texas, a town about 100 miles southwest of Houston and the place she credited for her moral and ideological development: "...all that I am or hope to ever be, if that is anything, I owe it to Edna, Texas, this small town." It was the place that shaped Adair's religious and gender identities. She "professed religion" at the age of eleven, when she learned that her godparents had blessed her as an infant, and prayed that she "would grow up to be a useful woman and a devout Christian." As a child, she played with toy dolls, a reflection of early gender socialization, teaching them the lessons she learned from her parents. She would later do much of the same when, as a teenager, she took over the Sunday School program at her church. Adair's parents taught her and her sister to be gentle and empathetic, even toward those who did not share their inculcated senses of respectability. Yet, Adair also knew her parents expected her to behave as if she understood "there was a difference between a girl who made a mistake and a girl who had kept her chastity."¹⁴

Adair's parents were illiterate, "but they both had high ideals." Her father, Handy Daniels, inherited a hauling business from his father. Adair assumed that Daniels learned his work ethic and his sense of honor by working with her grandfather. Daniels' daughters were expected to represent their father's values in public. Adair's mother warned her and her older sister that if they got a whipping at school, they could expect a reprise at home: "Girls, don't get whipped by other people. Nobody whips you. Your daddy don't whip you, so I am the only person to whip you, but you're going to get whipped." Whenever her father learned that Ada had given the girls a whipping, he would express "disgrace" at "the very fact that his daughter got a whipping." Her mother taught her that "no matter what anyone else has, you take what you have and make it useful. And don't let anything, job or anything else, make you; you make the job." Adair learned from her parents, then, to "make

the responsibility count,” to value hard work, to prove her merit, and to do these within the strict confines of respectable womanhood.¹⁵

ROLL B PAGE 14 LINE 19 ORIGINAL

POLL TAX STATE OF TEXAS
RECEIPT COUNTY OF JACKSON No. 290
 WARD DATE 1-24-1926

RECEIVED OF *Ada Daniels*
 ADDRESS *Edna*
 OCCUPATION *Housekeeper*
 RACE { ~~WHITE~~ COLORED SEX { ~~MARE~~ FEMALE

PRECINCT No. I
 AGE 52
 LENGTH OF STATE 53 COUNTY 52
 RESIDENCE CITY

PAID BY *L. H. Daniels* AGENT
 THE SUM OF ONE AND 75/100 DOLLARS, IN PAYMENT POLL TAX FOR THE YEAR A. D. 1926 THE SAID TAX PAYER BEING DULY SWORN
 BY *L. H. Daniels* DEPUTY *Berneka M. Neil* TAX COLLECTOR OF ABOVE SAID COUNTY

BENNETT PRINTING CO. PARIS, TEX.

Image 2 Ada Daniels' poll tax receipt in 1926. "Poll Tax Receipt," January 1, 1926, Box 4, folder 9, Christia V. Adair Collection. MSS 109, HMRC, HPL

Adair attended public school in Edna until the age of fifteen, when her godfather, Professor John W. Frazier, asked that she be sent to Austin to attend Samuel Houston College (now Huston-Tillotson College) to complete her secondary schooling. The school was, for her, "just a great big family," where in addition to traditional curricula, girls studied sewing, cooking, and home economics and the boys learned shop. After finishing at Sam Houston, she attended Prairie View, where she entered as a junior after passing entrance exams. She returned to Edna and taught there for two years until she accepted an offer from the superintendent of schools in Kleburg County to teach there. Her father recommended she ask for a raise, and she received one, teaching in a rural school at \$40 per month, a \$5 raise over her salary in Edna. There, about 130 miles southwest of Edna, in the small town of Kingsville, she met her husband, Elbert. He was a brakeman at a Missouri Pacific railroad junction whom she married about a year and a half later. They wed in May 1918 and stayed in Kingsville for the first eight years of their marriage. Of her husband, she recalled, he "was not a selfish man but he had high ideals and he had a lot of pride and he was a man."¹⁶

Gender, then, was an ever-present structure in Adair's early life. It shaped her relationship to her parents, her public performances, her education, and ultimately her career aspirations—though race certainly informed each of these as well. She remarked, for example, that she “became a woman” during her time in Kingsville, embracing her roles as a wife and a community leader. Kingsville was a “little town... populated according to race.” Adair recalled, “It had what they called Negro Town, White Town, and Mexican Town. And it looked like never the twain shall meet.” Her challenge as she saw it in the black community was a “big gambling house” that seemed poised to crush the life out of local families. Authorities had no interest in shutting it down because they were accepting bribe money to turn a blind eye. She was also disappointed that “[c]ommon-law marriage just prevailed terribly” in the town—a terrible stain on the race in the eyes of many middle class black Americans. She “found out that what people needed were example and leadership.” In her eyes, the town's churches were a dismal failure: the Baptist congregation had gotten rid of its pastor and “the Methodist minister was capitalizing on the fact that the money was easy, and whoever got to the men first would get their money. The gambler, the bootlegger, the preacher, the whatnot. So he was making a good stab at it and he was getting to them first and he was just taking advantage, I thought, of people.”¹⁷ She started a non-denominational Sunday school in the fall of 1918, pulling in children from around town, and using the children's involvement in church to capture their parents. She also convinced the Methodist bishop to replace the pastor, and a respectable Baptist minister moved into the Baptist church. The churches worked together to build community, and Adair recalled, “Parents began catching the spirit of furthering their children's education and people began sending their boys and girls away to school, to colleges. I think we got some very good results from those boys and girls whose lives we reached when they were little children.”¹⁸

Adair built community among the women of the town. Kingsville women had “fine ideals,” but needed a civic outlet, which Adair positioned herself to lead. Their experiences resembled that of their black foremothers: “Their songs were written and never sung.” Black women’s struggles and needs diverged a great deal from the concerns of white women, for black women labored for their larger communities under conditions that white women did not have to endure. Of second-wave feminism, then, Adair later opined, “I don’t particularly care about woman lib because the Negro woman has always had to work. I don’t think we had to get laws and bills passed for her to get a job, she could always work. I think, she, like everybody else if she prepares herself, she gets what she wants.” Nevertheless, Adair eventually became heavily involved in securing political rights for women after building an interracial coalition of “mothers” against vice in her town.¹⁹

When she saw one of her teenage Sunday School students exiting the gambling house one day, Adair said, “It just put war-fire in me. I just knew we had to do something, find a way or make one, because this was the last straw.” She learned from the student that he and other teenagers had been hired to work at the tables. She recognized it as a women’s issue, perhaps because so many of the men were heavily involved in gambling, or because she understood the moral rearing of children to be women’s duty, even though she had no children herself—or perhaps for both reasons and more. Whatever the reason, Adair believed that women had a gendered obligation to protect their families from immorality, but recognized that black women in Kingsville lacked the necessary political clout to effect change alone. One of her acquaintances, a white woman, was president of a Mothers Club, a predecessor to Parent Teacher Associations. “So we went to this woman,” Adair recounted, “and told her what was what and she just became fired up with it too. She said, ‘Well, no, you wouldn’t have no business trying to do it by yourself, because we can

help.” Negro Town organized its own Mothers Club, but Adair insisted, “It was really an interracial Mothers Club, but we didn’t recognize it in those days like I would now, or could appreciate it like I could now.”²⁰

The local sheriff became alarmed at the political organizing, “subpoenaed a lot of women to come to his office,” and there “held court.” Elbert informed Adair that the sheriff had no right to do this, but recommended that his wife and the other women show up at the sheriff’s office and simply deny any knowledge of what was happening. After allaying the sheriff’s fear with their feigned ignorance, Adair and the black women in her community contacted the white women of the Mothers Club to tell them of the sheriff’s actions. Those women encouraged Adair to call the district attorney. Once he learned that there was a gambling house in Kingsville, he “called real court then with authority,” and the sheriff was ordered to “nail up the building himself” as the women of Kingsville stood “on the sidelines rejoicing and praising God.”²¹

“The woman’s suffrage question” soon eclipsed the celebration. Adair did not find intrinsic “value” in suffragists’ efforts, aware that even if she had the right to vote, like black men in Texas, black women wouldn’t be able to vote in primaries, and the one-party state would continue to be ruled by white supremacists. Granted, Adair “knew we could vote in presidential elections and were satisfied, but we just figured we were not supposed to and didn’t try.” However, the white women of the Mothers Club “told us about this effort being made to pass a bill where women would be able to vote like men.” Collectively, the women of Kingsville organized, as did women across the country, and eventually secured the right for women to vote.²²

When William G. Harding, at the time a presidential candidate, came to town in 1920, Adair’s husband informed her of his arrival. Harding would be received at the train

station where Elbert worked. He told her that white teachers were taking their children down to the railroad junction to meet the candidate. With parental consent, Adair took eleven or twelve children with her to the train station, situating her class at the exact spot she knew “they would get the best attention.” (She discerned the precise location of the train’s stop because of the many times she had picked up her husband from work.)

Harding’s mistreatment of her group of children compelled Adair to switch political parties.²³ She recalled:

And when the train stopped, well, my husband was the rear brakeman, and he came out to open the observation gates so the candidate could get out to talk with the people. And so my children were right at the steps. And some white children were there by white teachers or parents, and he—Mr. Harding—reached over my children’s head to shake hands with the white children and never did pay any attention to my children. And I pulled my children out, hurt, disappointed, and sorry for the children. But in my own heart, I said, “If that’s what Republicans do, I cannot be Republican. I’ll have to change parties. From here on out I’ll have to work for Democrat presidents.”²⁴

Adair’s sense of responsibility toward the children of her community made Harding’s affront far too difficult to bear. She endeavored to begin working against the Republican Party by casting her own ballot in the upcoming election.²⁵

However, when the black women of Kingsville got “dressed up” and went to vote, Adair remembered they had been denied:

They gave us all kinds of excuses why, but we just stayed. We stayed, we asked, ‘We want to know why we couldn’t vote.’ The answers to the questions were so invalid, we were not satisfied. So finally one woman, a Mrs. Simmons said, ‘Are you saying that we can’t vote because we’re Negroes?’ And he said, ‘Yes. Negroes don’t vote in primary in Texas.’ So that hurt our hearts real bad and we went on. There was nothing we could do about that but just take it.”²⁶

Adair noted that the women stayed until officials explicitly said they were being denied suffrage because they were black. They understood that if they could get officials to acknowledge that race was the reason for disparate treatment at the polls, they could prepare a legal challenge to the practice. The predicament at the polling place, Adair

recalled, “made us realize that we—all the more—we had to do something that would break these discriminations.”²⁷

Black women, Adair reflected, had always been left out of prominent liberation discourses—both feminist and racial civil rights ones.²⁸ Later in the twentieth century, white women clamored for “liberation”—by which they meant freedom from the cult of domesticity that kept many of them out of the labor market. Many black women could not identify with the “the problem that has no name.”²⁹ Adair noted that black women had always been in the workforce, had always been compelled, by economic, political, and social circumstances, to aspire to better jobs and community leadership positions. Adair and other black women faced a different set of challenges than their male counterparts and their white counterparts; their survival hinged on breaking the mold of gendered expectations and racial restrictions, even as they embraced a language and legacy of racial uplift and attempted to secure their own womanhood. She would continue such efforts after she and Elbert left Kingsville.

Adair and her husband moved to Houston in 1925 when they learned he was diabetic and needed a less taxing job. Adair immediately became involved with a local Methodist church and joined a woman’s club that was “concerned with... a home for delinquent girls, located in the Acreage Home area.” Adair testified that she had never interacted with the type of girls who lived at the Dorcas Home for Delinquent Negro Girls—girls “who were dressed like prisoners and treated like prisoners.” She and the clubwomen would visit the home and deliver “nice little goodies” to the girls, but did little of the kind of moral entrepreneuring she had become accustomed to leading in Kingsville. After years of underfunding by the county, Dorcas Home was condemned in 1932—one grand jury noted that it was not “a decent place in which humans can live”—removing the

only home for juveniles that served black children from Harris County. Houston was far from heavenly, then, for those most vulnerable black residents. Adair regretted not fighting to keep Dorcas Home and not providing the kind of motherly care she believed the young girls needed. However, she appreciated her privilege, acknowledging that most black women had not ever had the economic security to do the kind of work she engaged in. She would make up for her mistakes with the girls' home by using her advantages as a housewife with a supportive husband to help lead black Houston's civil rights efforts.³⁰

A year after her arrival to Houston, Adair became the assistant to the first recording secretary of the city's NAACP branch, but shortly after joining, replaced her predecessor and became the "first volunteer secretary of the branch here." A lot of her early work focused on "rape cases where white people used to become dissatisfied and disgruntled about a thing." She explained, "The best way they could do, some white woman would holler that she'd been raped by a Negro or ventured to rape, or something like that, and of course that meant a burned or lynched Negro." One such case happened in Conroe. "But we were able to get a lawyer," she explained, "and a lawyer that won that case in our favor."³¹

When it came to issues of criminal justice, Houston was far less progressive than city leaders would have suggested. Though she appreciated the opportunities Houston offered black people, Adair also admitted that she "did not know that people could be treated like people in Houston were being treated." Not only did the excitability around interracial rape cases strike her, but she was also taken aback by the treatment of prisoners in jails where "they would beat up people and anything they wanted to do and kill people." The NAACP's defense of these victims of white prejudice led the organization to become Adair's "sole interest" next to her role at her church. Longtime black Houstonians would

remember her involvement in high profile cases, including the trial of Johnnie Lee Morris, a black man accused of murdering a white bus driver during a racial spat with a passenger. Her fundraising efforts helped afford Morris some of the city's best criminal defense attorneys, whose arguments convinced a jury to spare Morris's life.³²

In 1945, two years after her husband died, Adair realized that she needed a regular paycheck. She began selling Seventh Ward Bonds and was asked by the county extension agent if she might want to work as secretary to the Home Demonstration and County Agricultural Agents, a job which she accepted. Around that same time, the NAACP was able to establish an office in same building as Adair's workplace, and hired Lulu B. White as the organization's executive secretary, where the two women became acquainted. Eventually, the board of the NAACP was able to hire an administrative assistant, a job White wanted for Adair, which she accepted for three years.³³

Houston's NAACP experienced numerical and financial decline toward the end of the 1940s, due to Red Scare attacks and "infiltrat[ion]." As a result, by 1949 the organization could no longer afford to employ Adair or White. "So that left us without an NAACP," she recalled, "and the Board members [Ernest Ollington Smith, Sid Hilliard, Lee Haywood Simpson] called and asked me if I would take it."³⁴ Unfortunately, the work would be unpaid, but Adair resolved to rebuild the Houston NAACP: "So I went back into the office in February, 1950.... And began serving as administrator." The board assured her that her personal bills would be paid and that she could continue her lifestyle, and that as soon as they could, they would resume offering her a salary. She served in this capacity for twelve years, never salaried, but always receiving whatever was left after the organization's bills were paid. She reflected that she was "happy," saying, "I was doing what I wanted to do and liked to do and the people were cooperative. I had no problem whatever getting members.

I had some of the richest white people, some of the finest industrial Negroes were members of NAACP. And people who were afraid, they thought, of it, well, I was able to get them.”³⁵

Adair struggled against Jim Crow, from mundane indignities in downtown department stores to discrimination at the Municipal Airport. After several women told her that they were disallowed from trying on hats, girdles, and other garments in downtown clothing stores like Sakowitz’s, at the corner of Main and Dallas streets, Adair decided to “go try it out myself to see if this is really fact.” For such excursions, she practiced taking a witness who could testify to explicit declarations of discrimination. They would attest, among other indignities that sales clerks would prevent black women from sitting in the vanities and trying on hats; instead they would model the hats on themselves for black customers. She forced the issue at Sakowitz when she went in to try on a girdle. Store personnel attempted to force her into the alteration room when she asked to have the girdle fitted. She protested until she got a chance to speak with the manager, who told the employee to take Adair to a fitting room. Adair then pressed further. As the clerk walked away, Adair told her that she needed to stay to help Adair fit the girdle. “And she sort of fumbled with me, my body, and I know she felt like her little hands were being contaminated, but that’s what had to happen.” Adair tried on two more girdles with the woman’s help, and when she found one that fit well, despite not needing a girdle, she paid the \$29 for it.³⁶ This was a small political victory.

Adair’s work also extended to “‘big p’ politics.”³⁷ After black Texans secured the right to vote following the Supreme Court’s decision to outlaw the white primary in *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), Adair and her peers became concerned with voter fraud and organized the Harris County Democrats (HCD) in response.³⁸ Conservative white Democrats and

Republicans were buying the votes of “the gullible Negro and the ignorant Negro, the illiterate Negro, anybody that was weak enough to listen or afraid of something” with cash payouts and alcohol. M. L. Ward, a “perfectly ordinary man,” but president of his local civic club, Frankie Carter Randolph, a prominent member of the League of Women Voters, and attorney J. Edwin Smith and his wife Virginia, among others, became vocally concerned with this impropriety, and approached the Houston NAACP about rectifying it. After meeting with other black Houstonians for several nights, Adair’s new team of concerned citizens had a plan of action for disrupting the pattern of voter fraud, but they also understood they needed white allies. “At that time,” Adair recalled, “Negroes and white people couldn’t meet in public places together,” but the circumstances demanded an interracial assault. Allowed to meet in a local communication workers’ union hall, Adair held what she remembered was “the very first integrated meeting of people” in Houston. This kind of interracial cooperation would become more common in the 1950s. Adair said, “It was just like a League of Nations, because we went out and got the Mexicans and everybody else to come to the meeting.” That night, HCD was founded. “The chairman was a white man, the vice-chairman was a Negro woman, the secretary was a Negro woman, the assistant secretary was white, and on like that,” Adair explained. “It was just so mixed up so that they’d know nobody was left out.” She believed that HCD “did more for race relations, in promoting it in this county, than anything, including NAACP.” Together they learned how to build interracial coalitions of voters, how to shape issues that would resonate across racial divides, and how to secure wins for the local Democrat party.³⁹

The Harris County Council of Organizations (HCCO) became a major supporter of HCD, using its own infrastructure and connections in black Houston communities to bolster participation in HCD’s efforts. Adair’s prominence in the National Association of

Colored Women (NACW) also increased the HCD's political leverage. She remembered, "I could sit down and send a letter out to women all over the state and say this is the decision that the women of Harris County Democrats and the Council of Organizations people have made and we solicit your support for this candidate or this issue. And we got it."⁴⁰

In her capacity as executive secretary of the NAACP, as well as through her engagement with the HCD and HCCO, Adair became involved in the desegregation of Houston Municipal Airport (now William P. Hobby Airport). In 1951, Adair learned that the city of Houston was attempting to obtain financial support from the Civil Aeronautics Authority (CAA) to expand the airport, but that officials planned on continuing to mandate segregated accommodations, despite restrictions against the use of federal funds for Jim Crow facilities.⁴¹ Among other limitations on their freedom of movement, black folks (and non-black, dark skinned folks who were seen as "Negroes") at the airport were not allowed to sit in the open waiting room, they had to crowd among four benches that were pulled together to form a tiny square, they could not approach counters to buy a beverage, if they wanted to buy food they had to go to the kitchen door and have their food handed to them from kitchen staff, and they had to eat their food at tables that faced their segregated restrooms. The city further insulted black travelers by banning their arrival or departure from the airport in limousines, allowing them only to be ferried by black taxi cabs.⁴²

Adair learned that "no one had been sent from the Washington Bureau to make protest or to find out what the existing conditions are at the airport affecting Negro travelers."⁴³ In her first major project as executive secretary, she began documenting the abuses at the airport. One high profile case included Mary McLeod Bethune's refusal to sit in the "Negro" section, raising the ire of airport officials and creating a standoff. Another case involved military personnel who, upon landing in Houston, were told they could not

mingle interracially. “Usually,” Adair said, white military men and women would stand in solidarity with their black compatriots and protest the unequal treatment. Adair sent photographers for each such incident, documented the events, and turned over the information to the NAACP’s legal department, which then shared its evidence of racial discrimination with the CAA.⁴⁴

When representatives of the Aeronautics Commission presented the City Council with copies of correspondence between the NAACP and the Council, and letters between the NAACP and the Aeronautics Commission, and informed the Council that federal funds could not be used to on a segregated airport, “The man who finally became the mayor of Houston [in 1964], Louie Welch.... Got up and said, ‘We don’t need their money. We’ll build an airport. We’ll float a bond and build an airport like we want it.’” The CAA rejected Houston’s request for federal funds and the city floated a bond issue on the election ballot. Houstonians rejected the bond and halted the modernization of the airport. Progress was finally possible when Houstonians elected Roy Hofheinz mayor in 1953, helping him beat out Welch, then a city councilperson, and incumbent Oscar Holcombe. Under pressure from Adair, Hofheinz mandated that the airport remove all of its Jim Crow signs and change its customs, making it eligible for federal funds. The new mayor gladly accepted the cash so that the city “could have a better and bigger airport.”⁴⁵

Hofheinz also worked with Adair and the NAACP on desegregating public transportation. Together, the mayor’s office, the Pioneer Bus Company, the Houston Transit Company, and the NAACP held “two or three conferences,” after which the mayor instructed the Chief of Police to inform his officers that they were not authorized to “get on a bus to transact or decide anything pertaining between passengers and drivers until” the chief and the mayor were personally informed that there was an incident. Moreover, the

owner of the bus company instructed employees to avoid disputes with passengers and told them it was not their job to bother police officers “unless we send them to you.” These changes happened with relative calm; Adair remembered only one incident of racial antagonism afterwards “because a white boy had set upon in the Pioneer area to just kind of heckle Negro passengers and heckled a hat pin into himself by heckling a Negro girl, but it didn’t even reach the courts. They didn’t make a case out of it.” For her work in desegregating the city, many later celebrated her as the “Rosa Parks of Houston.”⁴⁶

Adair’s fight for racial justice in Houston was shaped by her gendered sense of responsibility toward the race and was also guided by her understanding of black citizens as the avatars of “America”—the nation and the idea. Near the end of her tenure with the NAACP, she addressed a public letter to fellow Houstonian, Mrs. G. McDonald, who lived on the southern edge of the growing Texas Medical Center. McDonald had written to the *Post*, accusing the NAACP of being “trouble makers” influenced by outside agitators. Adair lambasted McDonald for her discursive choices, particularly for “still talking slavery time language” by referring to black Texans as “our colored folks.” Adair assured McDonald that white people no longer owned “colored” chattel. She argued that the NAACP, far from degrading American society, was advancing it, compelling American democracy to more closely approximate its promise rather than its tradition.⁴⁷ The question for Adair was not whether black folk could prove their worth, but:

...if the white people in question are civilized enough to know that Negroes are human beings and that they have been in America as long as the white man has and that under the weight of cruel and most difficult conditions they have used every opportunity toward advancement, and that they do deserve their rights in the country that they have helped to make and build.⁴⁸

Adair's harshest rebuke of McDonald came in the letter's closing, telling McDonald it was a "reflection on [her] intelligence not to know the difference" between "trouble makers" and the NAACP. Adair's patience had worn thin.⁴⁹

Adair's letter did not go unnoticed. Mrs. A. McFarland, a white woman living in Oletha Texas, a rural town about equidistant between Houston and Dallas, wrote directly to Adair's office at the NAACP, calling the executive secretary's letter to McDonald a "verbal assault." She accused Adair of revealing her own "ignorance" and told her to read "the U. S. History" to learn the truth about how "the white man" had arrived on North American shores before "the negro." McFarland reprimanded Adair for being too sensitive, saying that "our colored people" was not a claim to possession, and that racial agitators like Adair were "looking for slights where none was intended." McFarland felt confident that the "race pride" of "colored people" was a farce, and believed their wish for integration was proof of their own sense of inferiority: "If the colored people... feel that they are the equal of the whites, why," she asked, "do the[y] try to force themselves on the whites?"⁵⁰

Adair responded to McFarland in kind. She asserted her knowledge of U. S. History, noting that the slave ship "Desire" arrived more-or-less with "the Pilgrim Fathers" of the Mayflower, bringing "livestock, household goods and other belongings, among which were the Negroes."⁵¹ Adair also spent a few sentences educating McFarland on how white Christians developed race as an ideology to justify slavery despite widely-held religious beliefs about the incompatibility of continued enslavement after conversion and baptism. Adair then went for the jugular, attacking McFarland's notion that Negroes "should spend more time and money to improve... morally." Certainly remembering the experiences of her own grandmother, who bore the child of a white man, she asked McFarland how well she knew the moral depravity of white southerners: "Do you know that the white men who

were slave holders... left their wives' bedrooms, went to the slaves quarters, ran the Negro men from their beds and their wives and there would spend as much time with her as he desired, many times he left his offsprings right there?" If McFarland opposed desegregation, perhaps she did not recognize that "all this," by which Adair meant the sexual assault of black women, "was forced integration." Taking the opportunity to attack white supremacist revisionist history, Adair suggested that McFarland seek out the Daughters of the American Republic and ask them to let her "read some of the history books which they have not altered, or torn pages from." Finally, Adair asserted that the United States was every black Americans' "home land," and that her own political mission was not to be offended by white intransigence, but to teach women like McFarland "the true worth of womanhood," which hinged on "justice, understanding, [and] tolerance."⁵²

Refusing to accept McFarland's characterization of black Americans' civil rights demands as a kind of encroachment on and veneration of whiteness, Adair publicly argued that the claims black Americans had been making for equal treatment for centuries was perhaps the most American claim any group had ever made in the nation's history, given the omnipresent scourge of white supremacy. She noted that it was both an act of respect and courage when "Negro Americans" continued the legacy of freedpeople, who had fought for their own emancipation, by demanding "more freedom... from the cruel monster of racial discrimination and segregation." She assured readers of the *Houston Post* that black civil rights activists in Houston and across the country had "pooled their efforts, their finances, their ability, their prayers, their determination, and their loyalty to America" to "eliminate" racial inequality in the United States.⁵³

In addition to her subscription to the values of American democracy and liberty, Adair's vision of a Houston and an America free of the "tyranny" of racialization was stirred

by her moral, social, political, and economic concerns as a woman, such that her polemics regarding racism were always refracted through a gendered prism. She felt that “the most beautiful thing that can happen to a woman” was to be a wife and a mother, and though she did not have children of her own, her life’s work had always been stimulated by a compulsion to teach and care for the generation that followed her. So, she entered into her dialogue with McFarland with much the same concerns that had animated her work as a Sunday school teacher, as a suffragist, as a member of the Mothers Club, and as a civil rights leader in Houston.

As a woman, Adair demanded empathy from McFarland. She addressed her as “sister,” making a claim to the equality of their womanhood. She appealed to McFarland’s sense of moral respectability, placing contemporary black suffering in the context, not only of the bold-faced discriminations that black folks faced in the twentieth century, but also of the “wicked” degradations enslaved black grandmothers experienced at the whims of men that they surely “hated.” She called on McFarland to join in solidarity with her, as a woman and as a Christian, to move beyond the crimination of black folks’ morality, arguing that any perceived moral depravity among them was a consequence of the limits placed on their upward mobility by white supremacy. Instead, she demanded that her “sister” understand the fundamental equality of all people.⁵⁴

Adair’s rhetorical choices revealed how insistent she had to be in order to stake her claim as both human and woman. She reflected on the ways not only her humanity, but also her womanliness within humanity, had been disrupted by racism. Later, when asked about her avoidance of the term “black,” she responded, “I will never, never, never accept the word as a black woman. I don’t want anybody calling me a black.” Instead, she insisted that she was a “Negro-American.” Adair clarified what appears, out of context, to be a

contradiction. For semantic reasons, she protested that folks who were called “black” in America were anything of the sort—having a wide range of skin colors that reflected their varied ancestries. But more importantly, she argued, “black” was the device through which white Americans had managed to strip people of color of their Americanness. It othered them. It was inscribed on Jim Crow signs that limited where they could sit, eat, and play. It was the color minstrel performers used to “ridicule” Negroes. The color, beautiful “when it’s applied where it belongs,” was, in the American context in which Adair grew up and worked, a dehumanizing moniker. Adair saw herself as a champion for the nation and for the “Negro race,” which she believed encompassed a variety of peoples: “some white ones, some yellow ones, some brown ones, some red ones, some all colors would be in there and yet they would be Negroes.” As a Negro, she proved “to be a credit to humanity and to [her] nation,” and “the color of my skin,” she said, “has nothing to do with it.” The ascription of blackness to her social status by white folks compelled Adair to reject discourses rooted in recognizing color as a legitimate basis for difference, and in doing so, she worked to protect her identity as an American woman. Color, she learned when it came time to vote in the 1920s with white women, placed a disturbing strain on her capacity to be treated, fully, as an individual American with all her attendant rights. She rejected color, and thereby, sculpted a political vision where color-awareness encouraged interracial cooperation in civil rights struggles. Her efforts to salvage the liberal individual subject from America’s caste system demonstrated the challenge of hoping for a “color blind” future in a present where color determined so much. Given their historical inheritance, “Negroes” could not be judged by people like McFarland on the basis of some arbitrary or allegedly universal moral scale. And yet, ultimately, Adair hoped, one day they could be.

Lastly, Adair worked out this color-rejecting vision in Houston. She lauded her adopted home as a special place. Its generally calm response following the desegregation of the airport and library compelled her to reflect positively on the city's capacity for racial progress. Houston, on the border of the South and the West, situated in Texas, but a coastal city with a robust economy, was perhaps Jim Crow lite. Black visitors, the black press, and Adair herself made note of how refreshingly calm, even if still demoralizing, the race relations in the city were: "I think Houston had less trouble with solving its problem in changing over from one custom to another than any city I know."⁵⁵ She had managed to build interracial coalitions and develop relationships with white city leaders that worked to tear down some of what Jim and Jane Crow had built. Houston, though it moved slowly toward her vision, had proven to Adair that what she imagined was not only possible, but that it could be obtained, peacefully, through interracial cooperation. However, though black Houstonians could appreciate the progress they were making in the middle of the century, these optimists would have to square off, constantly, against an intransigent white supremacy.

“**N**egroes not wanted.” If a sign that explicit had been on the door of Lockwood Inn, Carter Wesley could have avoided standing in the kitchen of this barbeque house in Houston's Fifth Ward, wondering how and why he had become Langston Hughes' "darker brother" in a black-owned establishment. In January 1953 he penned his reaction to this disgraceful "facet" of Jim Crow: "segregation by Negroes of Negroes." Wesley's wife, Doris, was not in the mood to prepare dinner that evening, so she called her husband and asked him to stop by Lockwood Inn for some ribs. He obliged, even though he "knew the Lockwood Inn was a barbecue

house that catered primarily to white [people]." He, therefore, "never thought of patronizing it." While the black-owned Kozy Kitchen across the street at 1101 Lockwood Drive attracted a mostly black clientele and customers looking for brisket, Lockwood Inn attracted "white office workers in shirts and ties" and patrons ready for ribs. As he walked up to the entrance, a white couple held the door open for him, and as he approached the counter, an older white man made room for him. Things were quite civil that day in "Heavenly Houston." The clerk whom Wesley now stood in front of at the counter continued about his business, seemingly uninterested in the newly-arrived customer. Soon the tall and rotund manager of the restaurant approached Wesley and asked him, "Will you move around here?" Wesley complied, moving around the counter's corner. Soon enough, another employee approached Wesley and requested that he "stand in there"—the kitchen. This humiliating relocation caught the attention of a white family who discussed the predicament in earshot and made Wesley wonder: was their analysis correct? Were these Negroes really maneuvering black patrons away from white ones? Once in the kitchen, he was again relocated to a table further away from the front of the house. Somewhere in the confusion, the manager finally took his order, but by now the pattern of service was clear: white customers were seated and served first in this black-owned business. Wesley spared no words for the manager, locking him in his "Ram's Horn"—the name of his editorial column in the *Informer*—and calling him "a little, timid, cowardly man" who dishonored his children, his community, Christianity, and the Constitution because he was "afraid to be a man." Wesley exited the back door of the establishment, telling the waiter who asked if he wanted his order, in so many words, that Jim Crow barbeque just was not appetizing. After Doris heard the story she told her husband she was "glad" he left the Lockwood Inn behind

with his manhood intact. She went into the kitchen, fried him a dozen oysters, and prepared for him a feast.⁵⁶

Wesley's commentary about the Lockwood Inn owner exemplified Wesley's editorial decisions in the middle of the century. As editor, he constructed a coherent narrative that linked, in one broad emancipatory project, school desegregation, fair employment and housing, electoral rights, access to public services, physical and sexual protection of black women, decriminalization of "the Negro," and accountability for police abuses of power. This project derided cowardice and valorized manliness and individualism (and manhood as individualism).⁵⁷ Ultimately, Wesley's vision was of a color-rejecting Houston, where men, whether in restaurants, courtrooms, or on the real estate market, would be treated rationally, as individuals. In his here and now, however, Wesley was a pragmatist who believed racial identity politics were necessary in the civil rights struggle. Like Adair's vision, Wesley's was structured by his belief in the American mythology of rugged individualism and democratic equality, as well as the hope Houston in particular seemed to offer for a color-rejecting future. Additionally, Wesley's gendered identity affected what he imagined was possible in his own moment, but also what he perceived might be possible in the future in terms of the eradication of race as a salient social category. As a man he had to be "rational," but his sense of what could be rational was constrained by his social location in Houston and his faith in liberal philosophy.

Wesley's color-rejecting vision for Houston and America was also an effort to preserve his gendered sense of self, which had been dismissed and ridiculed at the Lockwood. Similar to the ways Adair opposed the discounting of her womanhood, Wesley despised the ways that race could strip him of his individuality, and hence his manhood. His vision of a "color-blind" democracy was informed by his gendered understanding of himself

and of what it meant to be a black man in segregated America. Fundamentally, Wesley's sense of manly obligation to "the race" was defined, not in opposition to womanhood, but rather in opposition to the demands of white supremacy. It was characterized by commitments to what Wesley viewed as courage, rationality, and individualism.

Thus, in his commentary about the events at Lockwood Inn, his most biting critiques against the owner center on manhood. Wesley castigated the "cowardliness" of the owner. The owner's use of Jim Crow customs in his restaurant allowed him to pursue economic independence and providing for his family, sure. However, Wesley did not view this as acceptably manly enough, arguing that a man should not just take care of his wife and children financially, but should "provide honor for his family... [and] live honorably and with integrity in the community." Living with integrity meant "honor[ing] the principles of Christianity, the principles of the Constitution, and the general Golden Rule of good will toward ALL men." The owner of the Lockwood Inn apparently had a different understanding of his duties toward his family and community, and this was not an acceptable manifestation of manhood—a dereliction of masculine duty, even—for Wesley.⁵⁸

Wesley's demand for racial collectivism did not contradict his commitment to liberal individualist ideology. For him, the circumstance of Jim Crow defined what was presently rational, producing exigencies that could change over time. In one of the closing issues of the *Informer's* run in 1953 he explained this position as the South debated the future of public school segregation ahead of the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* the following year. At the time, Governors Hugh White of Mississippi and Jimmy Byrnes of South Carolina and Senator James Eastland of Mississippi were publicly discussing (and disagreeing about) a plan of action for keeping schools segregated if the Supreme Court ruled Jim Crow educational facilities unconstitutional. Foundationally, they agreed

that such a decision would be federal interposition on a states' rights issue. Wesley, a trained attorney, wrote, "I don't know what states' rights means legally.... The state has no right to discriminate against Negroes or to put any restriction on Negroes' privileges or ability to go where they want.... No state has the right, under the Constitution, to make any distinction based on color."⁵⁹ For him, Constitutional principles made legal recognition of race *verboden*. Thus the editorialists of the *Informer* wrote in commemoration of Thanksgiving 1953: "An era is dying and a new era is slowly coming to life for the era of repression of Negroes is on the way out and one of raceless equality is certainly being born before the eyes of all who have eyes to see."⁶⁰ The editorialists claimed, that this vision of democracy was "at the core of the perennial Negro agitation and complaint." They continued, "It is the beginning, and the end, of the Negro struggle. Once it is recognized and met without subterfuge or reservation, or unworthy and unchristian rationalization.... Then will the Negro struggle dissolve. This 'Negro goal' is essentially an American goal." But if Americanism and democracy were laudable, it was only because the two were equated with individualism. The editorialists concluded: "It [the 'Negro goal'] is squarely in line with American political and social philosophy as outlined in the constitution of the United States" wherein "race is not a factor in citizenship" and the "rights of citizens and individuals" was stressed.⁶¹

Wesley himself could not divorce American democracy from individualism. On November 7, 1953, he reported that he had started re-reading W. E. B. Du Bois's *Souls of Black Folk*. He praised the preeminent American sociologist and reminisced on his experiences in college when he and his peers debated over the political philosophies of Du Bois and Booker T. Washington. Wesley said that Du Bois's "courageous" writing and political stance "proved prescient" and impressed upon his subscribers to read it. The

remarkable failure of American capitalism that resulted in the Great Depression, coupled with consistent legal disappointments on civil rights questions, compelled Du Bois to recalibrate his politics toward scientific socialism.⁶² Wesley expressed confusion, disappointment, and “disgust” at the idea that Du Bois was turning “Red.” The only way he could rationalize Du Bois’s apparent swing to the left was in “imagin[ing] that he dares to support some of these crazy movements because he has the courage to deliberately want to embarrass the government in its practices of discrimination.” Wesley could not imagine that Du Bois’ prolific writing, with its strong democratic vision, could come from a man that could “ever really be a Communist.”⁶³ For Wesley and many Americans during the Cold War, any conceptualization of society that failed to center the individual as the atom in which the rights of “Man” inhered was undemocratic and un-American.⁶⁴ Thus, the eventual solution to social sicknesses caused by racism was the veneration of the individual and the eventual deconstruction of collectivist solidarities. This state of reality would, of course, be raceless.

Wesley’s desire to see a future wherein color did not determine a person’s life chances existed in tandem with his presentist commitment to racial identity politics. Wesley valued the individual as the central unit of society, which could have potentially been at odds with his calls for racial solidarity, especially when it came to economics. Though Wesley was not a separatist, the *Informer* frequently implored blacks to “‘buy Negro,’ even at the expense of sacrifice on your part.”⁶⁵ However, this was not an appeal to racial solidarity for its own sake. The editorialists noted:

The Negro individual owes it to himself... to support Negro effort whenever he can. He owes it to himself to ‘buy Negro’ as often as possible, and even to go out of his way to do so.... This is not an appeal to prejudice. It is an appeal to reason. On the basis of prejudice Negro businessmen are not entitled to preferential treatment from Negroes since prejudice itself is wrong. On the basis of reason they are entitled to such treatment, and should be given it as often as possible.⁶⁶

The individual's stake in patronizing a black-owned business was that "every rich, every powerful Negro individual is an asset to the entire group."⁶⁷ Of course at least some of the motivation on Wesley's part could have been self-interest; buying Negro would mean supporting the *Informer* and the businesspeople who led its staff. But this logic had a long tradition and was perhaps most reminiscent of Booker T. Washington's and Marcus Garvey's, especially when the editorialists wrote: "It seems doubtful that Negroes as a group can ever achieve full non-racial acceptance as long as they remain an impoverished, poverty-stricken group." Thus, what appeared to be racial chauvinism, the editorialists claimed, was actually "realistic" and essential. Moreover, "prejudice," by which they appeared to mean discrimination on the basis of race, was inherently anti-American because race itself was an undemocratic construct. However, insofar as race existed and actually oppressed peoples, these groups could create networks of solidarity. The end goal, though, was not to help "the race" in perpetuity as an essentialist collective. Rather, Wesley and his team hoped to see black people become individuals. Thus, the *Informer* resolved the tension between individualism and collectivism by arguing that solidarity functioned to correct existing discriminations and was necessary only insofar as Americans discriminated against each other on the basis of race. Visions of a color-rejecting future, then, did not compel black Houstonians to be color-unaware in the present. This was "realistic," rational, and pragmatic.⁶⁸

In the 1940s, Wesley reasoned that civil rights leaders' best bet for making gains was to "avoid an 'open attack'" on Jim Crow in order to prevent white backlash. He argued that black anger and impatience would spark recalcitrance in white liberals and "the white establishment."⁶⁹ Throughout the early 1940s he literally bought into the NAACP Legal Defense Fund's (established in 1940 by attorney Thurgood Marshall) work as one of three

major funders of the group's eventual and successful challenge to the Democratic White Primary in Texas—*Smith v. Allwright* (1944).⁷⁰ This type of work was congruous with Wesley's philosophy in the 1940s; he advocated gently chipping away at Jim Crow with calculated moves to secure the inclusion of the individual—in his case, the Negro individual—into the American body politic, where said individual would be able to employ democratic means to ensure that all of ze's rights were protected. Wesley “hammered away repeatedly and insistently on the same theme,” historian John Egerton notes. That theme was an unwavering desire for black people to have “a role—in combat, in the workplace, in the national scheme of things.”⁷¹

Though he had been pivotal to *Smith v. Allwright*, arguing with fellow attorney James Nabrit in the initial cases, and although he was publicly and financially supportive as the Legal Defense Fund argued *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950), Wesley's formal relationship with the organization ended in 1947 when he quit the NAACP.⁷² When Texas legislators attempted to avoid admitting Heman Sweatt into the University of Texas School of Law by creating Texas State University for Negroes (TSUN, now Texas Southern University), Wesley appeared titillated at the idea of such an institution being at the disposal of black law students and the black Texas community writ large. However this did not proscribe nor was it an obstacle to integration in his view. In a letter to Marshall, Wesley explained his concern that the “chances are 90 to 10 that the Sweatt case will be moot before you can get to the Supreme Court,” and argued that, if the case did fail, Texas's black population would nevertheless benefit from a well-funded, well-resourced school until a new desegregation effort could be taken up. For Marshall, however, TSUN would be just another Jim Crow institution.⁷³

A disagreement in approach and predicted outcome sparked this rift. Charles Hamilton Houston and Thurgood Marshall had adopted Nathan Margold's strategy to attack segregated schools by forcing southern districts to honor *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) and equalize school funding and teacher pay, thereby making racially separate schools fiscally unfeasible. This was Margold's "end-run on segregation."⁷⁴ Wesley, however, did not see this as a tenable plan for public education in general, and argued that the struggle for equalization of funds for black schools should be distinct from the battle against segregation. He attacked both Marshall and Lulu B. White, director of the NAACP's Texas branches at the time. He believed that black Americans who had to presently survive in a Jim Crow system could not afford to have all their legal resources thrown into a fight for desegregation, writing, "[I]nasmuch as we are separated, we should demand our right to equality."⁷⁵

Certainly, Marshall and White were not against equalized funding and surely Wesley was not a proponent of segregation. However, where Wesley saw a feasible end—fair distribution of financial resources among schools of all racial groups—Marshall and the Legal Defense Fund eventually wanted to see all of *Plessy* dismantled. The NAACP had legitimate concerns about how long it could sustain these localized court battles on limited funding. And by and by, the Legal Defense Fund was not simply trying to secure equal money for black schools; it was laying out a historical record of unequal funding to prove that separate had been unequal and that there was no good faith in Jim Crow. The rift between White and Marshall with Wesley grew, with Wesley printing some of his harshest critiques of the two in the *Informer*. Wesley defended his anger against the NAACP, saying he was not upset because Marshall and White disagreed with him but because they "accused him of supporting segregated schools."⁷⁶ Marshall equated Wesley's thoughts, quite unfavorably,

with Booker T. Washington's, condemning Wesley for accommodating white prejudice and being satisfied with "Jim Crow Deluxe"—what Marshall called "the easy way out."⁷⁷

Wesley was not alone in his dissatisfaction with the Margold Strategy. Black Americans were deeply conflicted on whether equal funding or desegregation should be their immediate goal.⁷⁸ Walter Vaught of Dallas, one of Wesley's readers, sent a letter to the *Informer*, quite disturbed by the push for integration, writing, "If Southern white [people] are so mean, why do we try to associate with them?... We ought to stick together and build an empire of our own."⁷⁹ However, Wesley was not a separatist; his advocacy for separate institutions of professional learning, for example, was carefully qualified and contextualized.

Neither Wesley, White, nor Marshall were opposed to desegregation as the ultimate outcome of the civil rights litigation that was moving through the courts in the 1940s. However, Wesley, the self-described realist, was intent on pressing Marshall and the Defense Fund to not place all of its eggs in the integration basket, for not only was the outcome unsure, but also the Defense Fund's national perspective did not duly account, he believed, for local particularities. The result could be unfavorable in the courts and the fight itself, if waged incorrectly, raised the ire of sympathetic white people. However, the NAACP had not come to its strategy for desegregation overnight. It was not until after the Second World War that the nation's courts and inhabitants appeared ready to acknowledge the unfeasibility of separately and equally funded schools for white and black Americans. The victory in Marshall's first major case, *Pearson v. Murray* (1936), forced the University of Maryland School of Law to desegregate after Margold's strategy of using the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to challenge segregation proved successful. With the Margold Strategy in tow, Marshall envisioned the toppling of Jim Crow in education, for separate was "inevitably" unequal and therefore forever vulnerable to legal

attack. However, the NAACP also understood that it could not fund equalization suits across the country in perpetuity, and in 1952 determined that it should focus its energy and funds on overturning *Plessy*.⁸⁰ The problem, then, was a misunderstanding that descended into *ad hominem* attacks exchanged in a series of private letters throughout the late 1940s. Wesley was not reticently accepting an “easy way out” and Marshall was not, as Wesley claimed, failing black communities and institutions by refusing to proliferate more equalization of funding suits.⁸¹ They both imagined themselves realists. Wesley recognized that schools as they existed still needed funding because the fight for integration, in his estimation, would be a protracted one. Marshall understood the financial and personnel situations the Defense Fund had to contend with and knew that funding equalization cases across the breadth of the Jim Crow South would simply be impracticable.⁸²

Whatever he lacked in knowledge about the financial straits of the Legal Defense Fund, Wesley knew much more about the immediate concerns of black schools in Houston. Even after the NAACP won Heman Sweatt’s case in 1950, in February 1953 the *Informer* reported that “the school administration knows about ‘horrible’ conditions existing in our schools.” The schools were “improperly” heated and drained, too many students were being assigned to classrooms built for a smaller student body, the desks were “worn out,” and the “sanitary conditions” of the buildings were deemed “insufficient.” The *Informer* noted that Sid Hilliard, representative of the Harris County Council of Organizations (HCCO), implored the HISD school board at its February 23rd meeting to give black schools a fairer share of the recently passed \$10 million bond. He notified the board that lawsuits were being brought against it for persistent negligence regarding its duty to ensure that Houston’s segregated schools were equally funded.⁸³ An editorial in the *Informer* praised HCCO and Hilliard for “sustained interest” in equalization as a “corrective

measure.” The column also admired that Hilliard made his statements in a public forum and “not behind closed doors where ‘deals’ can be made.” Hilliard’s approach was direct, but civil. It was reasonable and therefore the appropriate “American way” to force the board address the “school needs of Negroes.”⁸⁴

The HCCO and Hilliard continued their struggle into April. They offered the board until September to show considerable progress in fixing “Houston’s horrible schools.” Hilliard noted, “Our protest earlier this year was a conscientious effort to make school officials take note of these conditions and do something about them.” The school business manager assured the *Informer* that repairs were being made and Hilliard promised that the HCCO would re-inspect the schools for themselves to guarantee that there was proper heating, improved restrooms, better drainage, and sanitary cafeterias.⁸⁵ When school began again in September, the Director of Colored Schools, Allen E. Norton, had received a “‘new’ administration office” at an old school that had been condemned ten years prior “as a hazard to life and health by the Fire Department.” The *Informer* inspected the building and found “partitions” made out of a “heavy type of cardboard and wood type,” to divide spaces in the building. The floor remained unfinished and “the women’s toilet,” the paper reported, “shows its age through a coating of paint and the flimsy doors and walls which separate the stalls.”⁸⁶

The actual schools were in shabby condition as well. “The Houston Public Schools opened this week to enroll the largest number of students in the history of the community,” read an editorial. “Numbers, however, was not the really big news of the week. The big news was need.” A lack of space, both in classrooms and in outside play areas—areas that were quickly disappearing to make way for temporary structures to house more classrooms—exacerbated the challenges that black citizens faced in their unequal schools

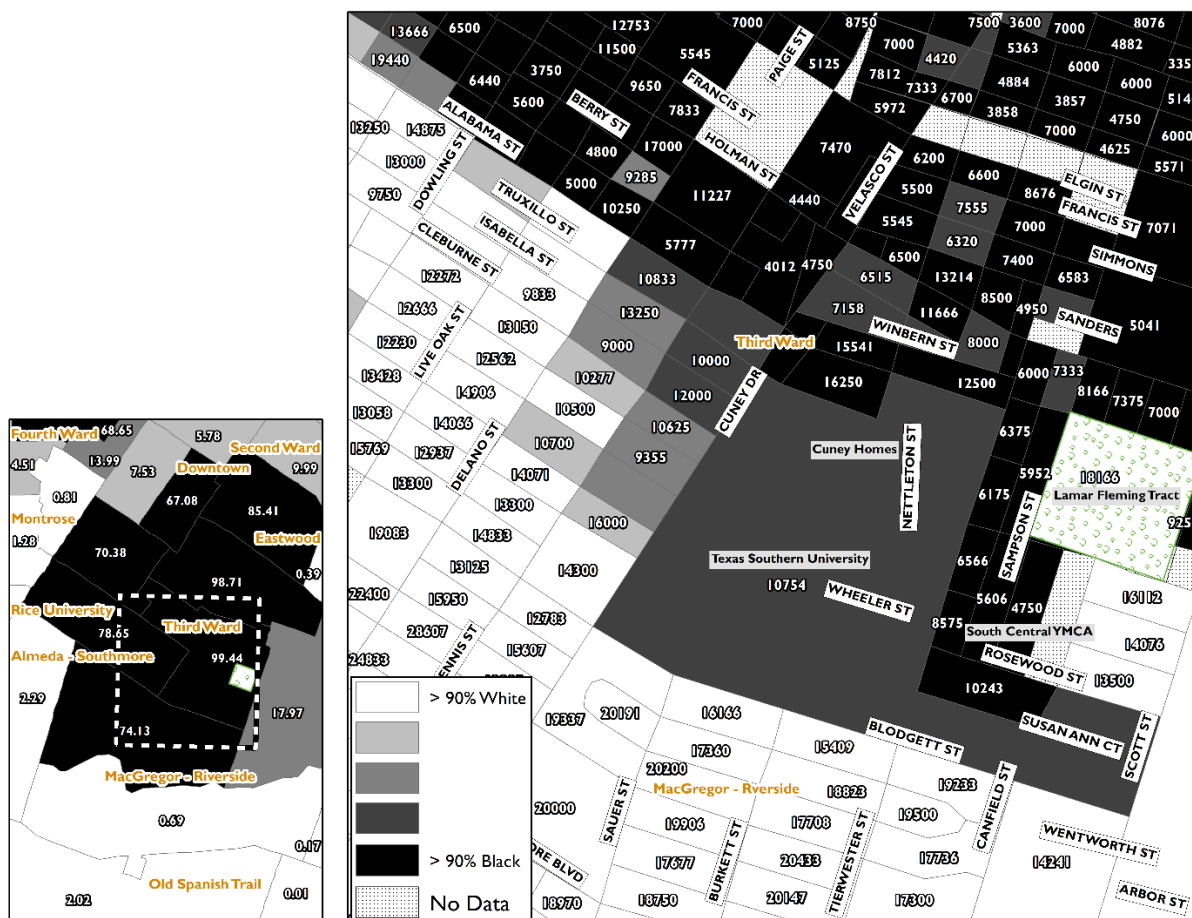
the previous year. Large class sizes, the editorialist explained, “reduced teacher effectiveness” and stole some “value of the school program” away from “the individual student.”⁸⁷ And though the *Informer* guessed that black parents would be willing to pay higher taxes in order to have their needs met, by November the paper read, “Negro voters would be more than foolish to increase the district’s tax take without some assurance that the inequality presently existing between Negro and white educational... facilities in the district will be speedily corrected.”⁸⁸ They encouraged black voters to vote against the school board’s proposition for more funding until they were guaranteed a fair share of the pot.⁸⁹

The year of 1954 did not bring much improvement for black schools either. On the tenth of March the *Informer* reported that, “Half of the high first class at Crawford Elementary School was wiped out Wednesday [at] noon when a dilapidated ceiling of concrete plaster crashed on the floor.” The school was located in Fifth Ward on Jensen Drive. The *Informer* quickly noted a “correction” to the original story, saying, “The above paragraph did not occur. But it could have. Actually this is what happened. 37 pupils at Crawford escaped injuries by only a few minutes... concrete plaster and [the] steel wire ceiling of their classroom crashed five minutes before the 1st graders were scheduled to return from lunch Wednesday.” The brick building was twenty years old, unmaintained, and was being used to “absorb the pupils of Dunbar Elementary,” which had been demolished to make way for the new Eastex Freeway.⁹⁰

The *Informer* reported that parents were outraged and inundated the offices of the paper with phone calls expressing their grief and anxiety. One father, Archie Stevens, called to say, “I had a look at the room this morning. It was a mess. Now something ought to be done about this terrible thing.” The teacher, Thelma D. Thomas, reported that she had

noticed cracks in the ceiling but didn't realize there was a structural risk because other classrooms were in similar condition. Her classroom, she claimed, had been "repaired" the previous year, probably as a result of Hilliard and the HCCO's pressures on the school board and business manager, but apparently the promised improvements were not as thorough as they needed to be. Thomas said it must have been luck that spared her and the students; if it had been a rainy day they would have all been under the ceiling when it collapsed.⁹¹

This near-catastrophe inspired another call to action. Hilliard was joined by fellow HCCO leader George T. Nelson at the March 22nd board meeting to "remind the Board of the critical conditions that exist in Negro schools." They and black community members "demanded HISD stop 'trifling around' with Negro school children and provide them better facilities." The Monday night meeting began at 7:30 and lasted for six hours into early Tuesday morning. Hilliard proposed, as he had in the past, that the school board build a new high school on land offered by Lamar Fleming, a wealthy merchant, in Third Ward located on Wheeler and Sampson near Texas Southern University. Though white Houstonians protested the site for a black school, arguing that would depreciate their home values, Hilliard and the *Informer* noted that it was "Negro area" by any measure. The *Informer* noted that a new high school on the tract would sit adjacent to the nearly 600 units of the all-black Cuney Homes public housing project, the growing campus of Texas Southern University (TSU), and the "Negro YMCA." Additionally, the "immediate vicinity" was populated by black-owned homes and businesses and the "handful" of white homes south of the proposed site were quickly being "enveloped" by majority-black blocks. Indeed, by 1960, those white homeowners left Third Ward, as did nearly 70 percent of the residents of the all-white Riverside Terrace neighborhood south of TSU (see *Map 11*).⁹² Meanwhile, Hilliard



Map 11 Racial make-up of blocks in Third Ward surrounding the Lamar Fleming Tract, labeled by average property values in 1950. The inset map shows that the Census tracts in 1960 by race and labeled with the total percent of each tract occupied by black residents. The white residents who lived on the three blocks south of the Fleming Tract left the area by the end of the decade.

showed that despite white people's claims about the effects of black people on property values, since this section of Third Ward had become predominantly occupied by black residents home prices had increased for some homes by nearly three times their original cost over the course of three decades. Hilliard also pointed out that the petition submitted to the board on behalf of white residents who opposed building a new high school on the Fleming tract had far too many signatures to have come from the sparse number of white residents still living in the area, where white residents occupied only 55 units and black residents 143 units.⁹³

The board refused Hilliard's logic and instead moved forward with a plan to build a

high school at the location of Dodson Elementary School, a tract of only seven acres of land just a mile and a half north of the Fleming Estate. In the meantime, old schools that had formerly been used for white students would be turned over to the department for “Colored schools.” Wesley pointed out what he saw as the conspiratorial hands of a racist school board, saying that there was no discernible reason for the board to avoid purchasing the land that Fleming made available for purchase except that it wanted to use those funds for white schools. Wesley noted: “There is no mistaking the fact that the people are angry. Even the women, who are normally the ones who caution against getting angry, are aroused, meeting, talking over the telephone, and projecting plans to fight what they count as an insult as well as a threat of irreparable injury to the education of their children.” He pointed forward to the five school desegregation cases pending a decision by the Supreme Court and optimistically noted that “whatever the decision,” the Constitution of the State of Texas would not allow for such gross inequalities in school facilities to exist. The Houston school board was opening itself up for legal bombardment and a desegregation order, given “the architect’s report that seven acres are not adequate” and a clear history that no white high schools in the city of Houston had been built on a mere seven acres in over two decades. Wesley concluded, “Negroes will be justified in insisting upon being permitted to go to the nearest adequate high school.” The school board was just being unreasonable in Wesley’s assessment. Jack Yates High School had already been unaccredited for reasons related to overpopulation, and this new high school would suffer the same fate. A school built at the Dodson sight would therefore “be no good and it would be wasted money.”⁹⁴

An editorial column made clear that such conditions were untenable under *Plessy*, and explained, “If inequalities exist in the schools it is the fault of the board and of the boards that preceded the present one.... When Negroes begin to recognize this the

foundation of progress in schools will be laid.”⁹⁵ The *Informer* repeatedly encouraged black Houstonians to attend the Monday night school board meetings and demand better educational facilities and fairer distribution of tax dollars for their children.⁹⁶ Protest or not, the school board refused to reverse its decision to dismiss the Lamar Fleming tract as a possible site for the erection of a new high school in the Third Ward until several months after the Supreme Court ruled against Jim Crow schools. By then, their discussion was merely a belated effort to provide black students with better educational facilities as a show of good faith so that the district would be able to maintain its pattern of segregation for as long as possible.⁹⁷

Wesley remained committed to the “rational” as the fight against Jim Crow moved forward. Like with the Lockwood Inn owner, when it came to the equalization versus desegregation debate, Wesley also diminished Marshall as a coward and “a shallow-minded, conceited man.” He concluded that Marshall was a “stupid man” and a “damned ingrate.” It appeared to Wesley that Marshall was playing political games with the newspaper publisher’s reputation, while failing to make a clear case for why the NAACP’s decision to demean the establishment of TSUN was the best plan of action. He demanded that Marshall come clean on whether he believed Wesley truly supported Jim Crow schools. “Why in two hells won’t you discuss that issue...?” he wrote. “Make up your mind and stop jumping and skivering [slivering?] and being evasive.” When Marshall proved unwilling to answer the critiques of the confrontational *Informer* publisher when challenged in person, Wesley wrote to the NAACP that Marshall “was not man enough to admit” that he was wrong in his misrepresentation of Wesley’s efforts, and that in doing so Marshall had proven himself a “coward.” He repeated the same in a letter to Marshall, copying multiple local and national NAACP leaders.⁹⁸ For his part, Marshall’s critique of Wesley in a personal letter offered a

candid assessment of Wesley's folly and lack of foresight in the school desegregation cases, writing, "You are not only unwilling to see other people's sides of a question, but are a little careless with the truth."⁹⁹ Though the *Informer* would later laud Marshall's many accomplishments in 1954, in both equalization and desegregation cases, Wesley's early spat with the attorney demonstrated that his sense of manhood and, related to that, gendered obligation to the race was defined by what he viewed as rationality and pragmatism.¹⁰⁰

After *Brown v. Board of Education* had been decided in May of 1954, Wesley maintained that Jim Crow would be dismantled and that a color-rejecting democracy was on the horizon for Houston, but that black folks had to understand that "easy does it" and that "it isn't necessary to pull our hair out" over "bitter, dyed-in-the-wool segregationists" who were slowing, and in many cases preventing, desegregation efforts in Harris County and across Texas.¹⁰¹ In the *Dallas Express*, Wesley encouraged black Texans "to go slowly and be cautious in selecting targets for desegregation," pointing to incidents in San Antonio where black youths had desegregated pools and the city had shut them down. Each stand against Jim Crow needed to be carefully calculated. Like the NAACP's approach to desegregating graduate schools before undergraduate institutions and public schools for children, Wesley suggested desegregation in spaces that did not lend themselves to white supremacist tirades against the coming tide of "social equality."¹⁰² That is, he encouraged black citizens to fight for integration in spaces that were not perceived as intimate, such as in public libraries, parks, and golf courses. Leaders "should refuse any public statement but quietly keep... talking with people who control the parks and golf links."¹⁰³ Pragmatically, Wesley maintained that whatever plan of action worked in dismantling Jim Crow was good, but that some strategies would be more effective than others. Ironically, however, his pragmatism in this case seemed at odds with the moral commitments that undergirded his critique against

the owner of the Lockwood Inn.¹⁰⁴ The relatively “radical” and straightforward assault on segregation as practiced by Marshall or performed by the temporary integration of a swimming pool were neither useful nor desirable approaches. Slow, steady civility was Wesley’s mantra in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Nevertheless, Marshall’s comparison of Wesley to Booker T. Washington was strained. Though Washington and Wesley shared similar values of economic uplift, Wesley was a newspaper publisher with a sharp tongue who did not depend on white patronage. Therefore, he frequently failed to spare harsh words for black or white people who fell out of his favor. His public voice was an extension of his gendered sense of self, and where courageous manhood demanded confrontation, he did not work to appease white people’s sensibilities. Liberal individualism, in which Wesley remained heavily invested, and the public sphere, the space in which Wesley worked, were built on the idea that men found legitimacy, as individuals with inherent rights, because of their capacity to reason as public actors.¹⁰⁵ So, while the owner of the Lockwood Inn had been a “coward” of a man, Wesley saw himself as being realistic—*reasonable*—and therefore a man. Of manliness he wrote, “Men today do not possess their own souls, they let fear take over... to find a safe spot to stand during the storm. I believe a man ought always be in possession of his own soul, and that the only way he can be is always willing to do whatever is necessary to stand for the right and never to get away from it.”¹⁰⁶ He surely did not see himself as soul-less and adrift at sea, and certainly viewed his position on the equalization issue as the best calculation. For him, the “necessary” would be constrained by context, possibility, and usefulness. He demonstrated that masculinity is constructed discursively—that masculinity is “multiple” in its possible expressions and that it morphs in different social situations. Though he rhetorically only represented himself as one type of “man,” the evidence suggests otherwise.

His aggressive approach to dealing with Thurgood Marshall was incongruous with his hesitant approach in the push for civil rights.¹⁰⁷ Wesley staked his claim as a man through rationality, and positioned himself in opposition to the kinds of manhood represented in Marshall's aggressive legal strategy, which he believed was "in absolute conflict with the best interests of black Texans," the Lockwood Inn owner's "cowardice," and the integrating swimmers' errant efforts—all of which he maintained were irrational.¹⁰⁸ His understandings of manliness, then, were tempered by what he understood as civil, contextually appropriate, realistic, and reasonable.

But Houston changed rapidly during the 1950s, and Wesley was not so stubborn as to refuse on principle to adapt to the city's evolution. This rational man could transform his politics as context demanded, and following the *Brown* win, Wesley shifted his political posture and caught some Houstonians off guard. In 1956, Mrs. J. Edwin Smith, at a political rally held at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, condemned Wesley for refusing to meet with white liberals, and argued that while black Houston's white allies had not changed, it seemed Wesley had. Wesley agreed with her, writing in the third person: "Carter Wesley has changed, and SO HAVE THE TIMES!" He argued that what "we fought against in 1948, 1950, 1952, and 1954" were battles won, and that the new struggle—the post-*Brown* struggle—was no longer against the law and tradition of segregation, but against "the die-hard traditional segregationists, who are defying the law and the weight of opinion from the better thinking leadership of our nation." His "raceless" vision for Houston's future was coming to fruition, he argued, and there was evidence on the city's golf links, public buses, labor unions, church sermons, and even some residential neighborhoods. "I hold that we have moved from the foot of the mountain," he wrote, "to the plateau upon which all the rest of the American citizens stand." If Mrs. Smith and the city's white liberals expected

Wesley's cooperation, they had to accept that his politics adapted to circumstance even as he maintained his commitment to the color-rejecting vision.¹⁰⁹

Wesley's sense of what was rational prior to *Brown* had proven wrong: the desegregation suits had been successful and equalization suits were no longer necessary. His post-*Brown* rationality would also prove limited, structured as it was by his faith in Houston's penchant for progress and his commitment to liberal individualism. Only four years after *Sweatt* had been decided, the Supreme Court decided on the school desegregation cases and overturned the separate-but-equal principle in public education. Thurgood Marshall's deployment of the Margold Strategy proved effective.¹¹⁰ Yet, despite the Supreme Court's order in *Brown II* (1955) that school districts desegregate "with all deliberate speed," the Houston Independent School District resisted anything more than the pretense of ending its dual school system until, in 1960, a direct court order by Judge Ben Connally demanded the board's compliance with the 1954 decision.¹¹¹

The intransigence of the school board aside, Houston exhibited its penchant for progress in other ways that encouraged Wesley to imagine a bright future ahead for all the city's residents. He pointed out the growth and progress of the Texas Medical Center, with its new "tremendous number of buildings" that promised a healthy future for the city. Even Hermann Hospital "looks drab," he said, in comparison to the "galaxy of great buildings" that had transformed the landscape south of downtown. He also pointed to expansive, newly-finished freeways that connected the city in a dizzying network of flyovers, feeders, and superhighways, including Highway 59's cut through the Fifth Ward and the increasingly convenient Memorial Drive.¹¹² And Houstonians in general, Wesley believed, offered more hope for his vision than did their elected school board officials.

Other black leaders in the city shared Wesley's cautious optimism. Dr. J Reuben Sheeler, local pastor and chair of the History and Geography Department at TSU, believed that "the history of the United States has been a slow and painful realization of the implications of the Declaration of Independence." His vision was for "a creolized society that is the result of mixture from everywhere," in which all Americans were fully integrated "in every social, economic and political aspect of [the nation] from Watts to Washington." However, poverty and discrimination threatened the very foundations of American democracy in the 1950s, as the country's enemies used its racial and class divisions to highlight U.S. hypocrisy in international media, he argued. Sheeler hoped for non-violent social change in America, but acknowledged that "violence/rage is the American way."¹¹³

On October 7, 1957, during the annual banquet of the Negro Chamber of Commerce (NCC), Sheeler admonished Houstonians not to fall into that old American tradition of violence, pointing to events in Little Rock. He hoped for the best, but acknowledged, "Trouble over integration can occur in Texas; in fact, it can occur in Houston." His vision, and the NCC's vision, of fair economic empowerment in a "bi-racial" society, remained at risk of dissolution if the leaders of Houston did not proactively prevent violent segregationists from fomenting trouble in the city.¹¹⁴ Wesley, however, remained hopeful that Houston would again prove its penchant for progress, preferring to highlight that integration had happened peacefully in the most unexpected of places with proper leadership, including in Clinton, Tennessee, where, in 1956, white citizens rioted against school integration, but where some semblance of order had been restored. Moreover, he said, he expected "a tight little knot of states, consisting of the remnants of the 'Solid South,' Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Mississippi, and Florida to crack by September 1958," as the courts would demand enforcement of the law.¹¹⁵

Wesley expected no less to happen in Houston. Indeed, he noted that despite the South's infamous reputation for suffocating race relations, "at foundation there is better relationship between whites and blacks in Houston than there is in any other city of size in the South." He acknowledged that a recent mayoral candidate had run on a segregation platform and that the KKK, the Minute Women, the White Citizens Council, and the HISD school board actively worked against racial progress in the city. However, he also reminded readers that "Negroes in Houston were the most stubborn in their efforts to get into the Democratic primary," and that after they won *Smith v. Allwright* (1944), black Houstonians voted in the city "without interference." The inclusion of black citizens on juries and jury commissions, the desegregation of golf courses, and the integration of bus seating all occurred without mob violence. "For me all of that comes around to the vote that was cast for Mrs. White," he said, referring to the election of Hattie Mae White to the HISD school board in 1958. He wrote that her win was "final proof of my thesis that the people of Houston are at this instance more ready to endure, tolerate, or receive integration in public facilities, than is any other city of its size in the South." Indeed, Hattie Mae White's victory encouraged Houstonians and outside spectators to view the city's race relations as a good omen for what was possible in a metropolis that was shedding the vestiges of Jim Crow.¹¹⁶

Hattie Mae White had been a teacher before joining, as a politician in her own right, the fight against educational segregation.¹¹⁷ In November 1958, she was "the first Negro ever to be elected to the Board of Education of the nation's largest segregated school district." Like Adair, she framed her work in gendered terms. The moral issue of racial segregation notwithstanding, White felt compelled into political action by the responsibilities of motherhood. Though members of the community saw her as a viable candidate for other influential positions, the *Informer* noted, "Mrs. White only wants to see her own children

grow without being bogged down by segregation laws.” Her sense of duty as a mother compelled her to act in ways that her racial identity alone had not. “It wasn’t until I saw my own children growing up under segregation that I really objected,” she explained. “I guess it is easier to accept injustice for yourself than for your children.”¹¹⁸ On the matter of racial integration, she said, “My only thought is that until you have people actually sharing the same experiences,” there could be no “equal opportunity.” Her vision was a school district where Houston’s racial groups came together and shared in the bounty of each other’s company and resources.

White and her husband Charles, a local optometrist, had five children at the time she announced her candidacy, four of whom were attending Houston’s schools, and an eighteen-month-old daughter, Hattie Berenice, who they hoped would not have to face the same kinds of challenges her older siblings did by the time she was ready to enter kindergarten. Their eldest, Richard Wendell, was in the eleventh grade at Yates High School. Charlotte Anne, eleven years old, attended Miller Junior High School, which had been “converted from a white to a Negro school” two years prior, as black citizens pushed the southern boundary of Third Ward into the MacGregor area, and was in “the condition of disrepair and filth,” by the time it was reviewed by the United States Commission for Civil Rights only seven years later.¹¹⁹ Eight-year-old Susan Charles and five-year-old Mae Edwins both attended Blackshear Elementary School in Third Ward.¹²⁰

Though the Whites’ children made “remarkable records in school work” and were actively involved in their community, Hattie Mae argued, in terms of desegregation, that “harmony and cooperation are requisite if there is to be survival and survival is often the result of adequate education.”¹²¹ HISD’s policy of segregation, regardless of the individual successes of her own children within the system of Jim Crow, severely limited their life

chances. She argued, “There must be a common bond among us all to steer us away from that which would destroy our lives.” While vice, crime, and delinquency were also targets of her platform, and though she understood that “the school, the church, and the home” were all central institutions “to develop each individual to the most complete maturity,” White surely believed segregation restrained black children’s educational progress.¹²²

Carter Wesley supported White’s vision, endorsing her in his “Ram’s Horn” column.¹²³ White citizens also publicly backed her. One Houstonian sent a check to the *Informer*, asking it to be passed on to Mrs. White’s campaign. The writer asked, “If there is anything that anyone thinks we can do to help other than what we are now doing among the people we can reach, I hope you will have them contact us.” Another white citizen maintained, “[W]e believe that Mrs. White is not only competent for the position on the school board but it is high time that the citizens of our community realize that representatives of every group of citizens ought to be on the school board.” The letter concluded by noting it was important for White to be on the board not only because of her “ability,” but also because racial representation mattered in and of itself.¹²⁴

The *Informer* lauded the fact that she managed to build a successful interracial coalition around her campaign “in Houston, a traditional southern city.” Indeed, the *Informer* reported, “Side by side Negro and white had worked shoulder to shoulder during the campaign” and “more than half of her votes were cast by whites.”¹²⁵ Houstonians were somewhat behind the times relative to other business-oriented southern cities.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, white citizens were proud of themselves, Carter Wesley reasoned, because “they had measured up to the best of American citizenship in voting for this woman in an era when it still seemed suicidal.” If it failed to accomplish much else, the election of White “proved... to the nation that Houston does not belong with Georgia, Little Rock, and other

areas, lost in a fog of contention and rebellion.” Houston, though “southern,” was not quite *that* southern. “Here was the largest city in the South, in the middle of one of its tensest periods in race relations in our history,” Wesley reported, “cutting across party lines, racial lines, and religious lines not only to elect a Negro woman to the school board, but to give her the largest vote of any of the 11 candidates that were running in the three positions.” The city, in his estimation, “took the lead in the field of common sense in race relations throughout the South,” and assured the Houston community that interracial politics could be practiced there “without the fear of pogroms or retaliation.” Wesley applauded white liberals for finally finding their courage, and noted that even some white conservatives had taken to the ballot in White’s favor. He assured them that black Houstonians’ “faith in humanity was again restored to full measure.” Heavenly Houston, “already an industrial and banking leader of the South,” also became the region’s “leader in moral integrity and courage.”¹²⁷

The jubilation over White’s election became more measured very quickly. While White believed her election indicated that Houstonians were ready to integrate their schools, the *Informer* was a bit more hesitant, suggesting that citizens’ wishes had little to do with whether the school board would move forward with desegregation. “With five out of seven members of the Board vehemently against desegregation,” the paper maintained in late 1959, “Mrs. White is in no position to be a decisive force against segregation.” While her conservative colleagues argued they had been ordered to desegregate but not to integrate, she responded that they were indeed the same thing and white folks were

obfuscating the issue. Despite the uphill battle White faced, liberal Houstonians imagined the city a leader within the South toward racial conciliation. Watching White participate in the Board's televised meetings "is like watching a little bit of the future," William Peters wrote.¹²⁸

Hattie Mae White's journey to the school board was not all interracial cooperation and Houston progressivism. In 1956, Hattie Mae White found herself compelled to organize toward the end of educational integration because, as she noted, "the so-called conservatives were in control [of the school board] and the White Citizen's Council was active in Houston," and this coalition of official and community power brokers was spreading propaganda to raise public sentiment against the *Brown* decision. Most white Houstonians staunchly supported keeping their schools segregated. In the summer of 1955, Jackson E. Logan, a seventy-four-year-old resident of the Heights neighborhood, and former government employee, wrote a letter to the *Post*, expressing his "disgust" at the perspective that integrating schools could be positive. Though he had not finished high school, Logan positioned himself as a constitutional scholar of sorts, arguing that "the Supreme Court of 1896 was correct in its opinion that equal facilities satisfied the 14th Amendment to our Constitution, the present Supreme Court's opinion notwithstanding."¹²⁹

In 1956, when the White Citizen's Council requested an hour of television time from HISD to make their case, so too did the Parent's Council, of which White was a member. However, the Parent's Council was a racially heterogeneous coalition, and at least one member suggested "that it was the responsibility of blacks to chiefly say why they should integrate the school system." In response, White "organized a small group in [her] home" that also requested an hour's worth of television time from the board. This new, unnamed group of concerned black citizens decided on a three-pronged approach to

convincing the public of the merits of their argument. They recruited Gloria Bradford, the first black student to graduate from the University of Texas School of Law, to discuss the illegality of continued segregation. Moses L. Price, pastor at the Greater Zion Baptist Church on Trulley Street in Third Ward, agreed to discuss the “moral aspects” of integration. The group also managed to secure the assistance of an unnamed medical doctor to highlight the economic issues surrounding the maintenance of Jim Crow schools. However, upon learning that the doctor’s medical association, which “was just beginning to admit blacks into its organization,” required any statements or articles made by its members to be reviewed before being publicized, the group understood that they would need a different spokesperson in order to protect the integrity of their message. White recalled, “[I]t fell in my lap to do it.”¹³⁰

A white woman named Charlotte Kraft helped White prepare her statement, using materials they had gathered from departments of HISD’s administration, as well as outside sources. Kraft and White were best friends; they labored together in the interest of integrating Houston’s schools, not only defying the political order of the day, but also the social one. Throughout this process and during her time on the school board White said that she called Kraft a “friend” whom she could disagree with, but whose “kind of assistance” she could not have done without. In their work together, they demonstrated that while the physical plants of white and black schools may have looked comparable to passers-by, black students suffered the negative consequences of thoroughgoing inequality: unequal library facilities; no swimming pools in black schools “except that it had been a school inherited” from white Houstonians; outdated and tattered textbooks; no accommodations for sports like golf, tennis, and archery for black students; and disparate teacher-to-student ratios, where white schools benefited from lower proportions. White

and Kraft also remained interested in the ways these inequalities were not just patterned on race, but also ethnicity and class: “it was also for the poor white children or Mexican American children” that they fought for integration.¹³¹

That same year, after the social liberals faced resounding defeat in the school board elections, HCCO began soliciting White’s thoughts on a school board election run, but it was not until 1958 that she agreed to make the effort. Though there was some friction among community organizations, and particular antipathies between HCCO and the Houston Ministerial Alliance, White was able to garner broad support for her run. Christia Adair used her clubwoman connections to ascertain if black Houston was ready to support a candidate of her own, and worked with White as the campaign ratcheted up. Together, White, Adair, and others built an interracial coalition to support White’s run. An additional source of friction came from the Houston Association for Better Schools (HABS), a re-imagined Parent’s Council following the 1956 election defeat. This organization would be a tighter coalition of concerned citizens than the Parent’s Council, for it would remain organized throughout the year rather than just in the interest of elections. The president of HABS, a white oilman, did not believe that Houston was ready for a black school board candidate. White, however, was convinced it was time. She had been an active part of mobilizing black voters and she understood the urgency of educational equality. Disagreement in HABS compelled them to avoid putting together their own ticket, leaving more space for White to campaign.¹³²

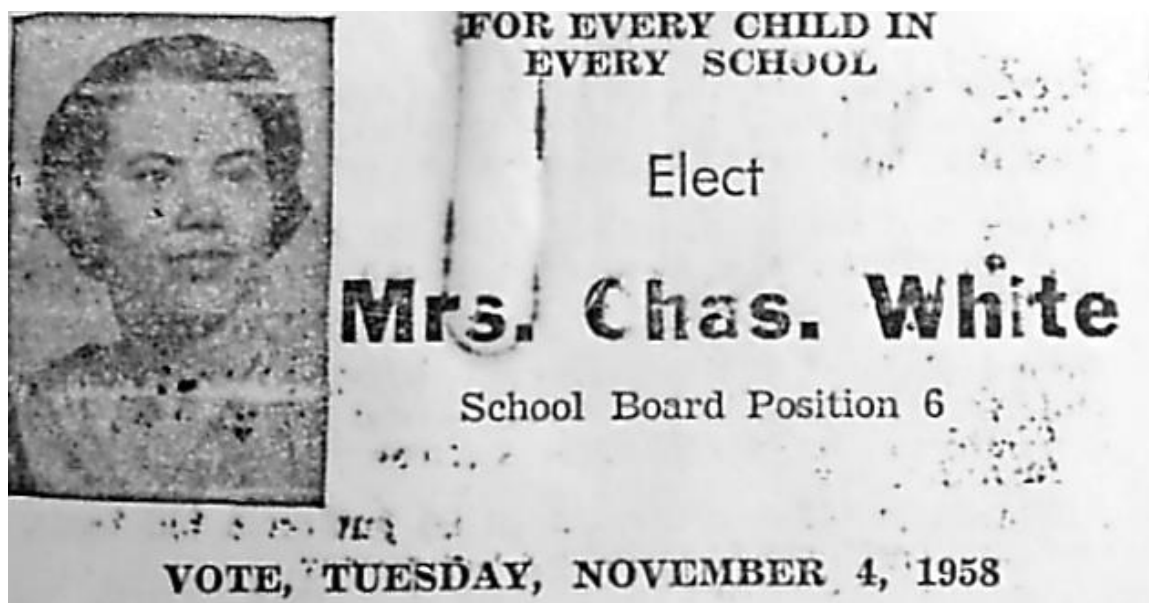


Image 3 Printed election flyer to elect Hattie Mae White to the Houston Independent School District. "Elect Mrs. Chas. White," n.d., Box 3, folder 6, Christia V. Adair Collection. MSS 109, HMRC, HPL

White ran on the slogan, "For every child, in every school." As a former teacher, she pulled on her knowledge of how schools work and what children needed to fashion a compelling, robust campaign. Though she opposed segregation, she believed that if segregation were to prevail, HISD was still mandated to provide every child "an equal opportunity to develop his capacity..." She recognized that schools that served the wealthiest Houstonians, like Bellaire High School, situated in the southwest suburb of Houston of the same name, and Lamar High School, located two blocks south of the mansions of River Oaks, were not left wanting. But the high schools which served poor white students and all minorities seemed always to face fiscal shortages when they requested updated facilities, and consistently lacked enough faculty who could offer courses outside of core subject areas that might expose students to new career paths. White's own daughter only had access to two years of foreign language, no opportunities to learn languages like German, and no chance to take a calculus course.¹³³

Fighting for equal opportunity at the level of the school was futile; White found that she faced opposition even from some black school principals who did not want to “disturb many waters.” Like black communities had done since the beginning of Reconstruction, parent-teacher associations in Houston “bought many of the things that the school board should have been providing for the children.” Indeed, throughout the South since emancipation black parents had to privately subsidize the public schools that served their children. Historian James D. Anderson explained, “On the one hand, the process of double taxation and collective social action enabled them to improve tremendously the material conditions of their educational system; on the other, this same process was unjust and oppressive, and their accommodations to double taxation helped extend over them the power of their oppressors.”¹³⁴ White anticipated Anderson’s insight, saying, “I thought you should pay taxes that would support the schools and all the children should have the supplies. At that time it was knowledgeable that black teachers did not get the same supplies for their children that white children got.” The practice of paying double—of essentially giving over tax dollars to educate wealthy white children and also paying extra in order for their own children to receive a pittance of the same quality of education—was one White “didn’t agree with.”¹³⁵

A racial cross-section of Houstonians agreed with her position and elected Hattie Mae White to the HISD board on the fourth of November. Two nights later the Whites’ children found a burning cross on their front lawn. Her husband made light of it after the fact, saying, “Since Monday people have changed my vocation to fireman. And I suppose that is true because my wife can feel assured that I will stay close to her and extinguish any other fires that come up so that she will be free to go about her work.”¹³⁶ However, both he and the rest of the family must have been frightened at the possibility of continued white

supremacist violence. In December, Hattie Mae's empty car was vandalized, the windshield demolished by gunfire from rifles.¹³⁷ Houston was not as immune to racial violence as Carter Wesley had hoped.¹³⁸

Houston's mainstream black leaders worked out their vision for what they called a raceless future with a thoroughgoing commitment to liberal individualism. At times, their approaches differed and brought them into conflict. Carter Wesley's spats with Thurgood Marshall and Lulu B. White over whether to prioritize educational desegregation over equalization efforts were particularly bitter. He attacked Marshall as an "ungrateful, selfish, long son of a so-and-so" and a "coward." He attempted to "refrain from expressing" his thoughts on the "dumbness of Lulu White," and disparaged other local and state NAACP officials who sanctioned their misrepresentations of Wesley as a "measly gang" and "cheap blatherskites." These ad hominem attacks did not merely reflect Wesley's concern with the denigration of his reputation, but also the ways his conceptualization of manhood as rational, pragmatic, and honorable shaped his political strategies.¹³⁹

Some conflicts were less bitter, but no less troubled with tensions about what was understood to be feasible politics at a given moment. Hattie Mae White's election bid seemed too audacious for many white and black liberals who supported the Parent's Council and HABS. They believed it was too risky to have a black candidate run for office, though they relied on a coalition that included black voters. And Adair's tenure as Houston NAACP Executive Secretary was not without its struggles. In 1954 Houston's NAACP suffered internal political struggles, including one in which Lulu B. White, among other local NAACP members, pressed to get her removed from her position by the National Office.

White, for example, wrote that board members of the Houston branch were “all tired of Adair” but that “none of them have the courage to fire her.” However, both Hattie Mae White and Adair believed it their obligation as mothers in/of “the race” to build interracial coalitions that defied the precepts of Jim Crow and that would ultimately help to undo its legal foundation.¹⁴⁰

Whatever their differences, the city’s mainstream black leaders shared a belief that a liberal individualist, raceless future could be realized in “Heavenly Houston.” However, despite their frequent critiques of structural inequality, black Houstonians’ philosophical commitment to individualism was also prime discursive space for their white counterparts to develop ahistorical counterpoints to accusations of racial inequality and demands for structural solutions.¹⁴¹ Discourses about crime were particularly well-suited for undermining black people’s critiques. Indeed, black leaders themselves oftentimes framed problems that faced black communities—unemployment, overcrowded homes, and overexposure to certain types of crimes—as consequences of segregation. Yet, they would still argue that crime reflected an individual’s moral failings and, even more dissonant with their structural interpretations of racial inequality, would charge the “Negro race” had a responsibility to address “Negro crime.”¹⁴²

The individualist vision of a raceless future, then, was already vulnerable to dismissal when blackness and criminality were co-articulated. As Houston’s leaders managed to topple Jim Crow in various institutional settings, a burgeoning social system emerged in its place—nascent, but highly adaptable. The color-rejecting vision of black Houstonians would not be accepted by white segregationists, whose identities and philosophies evolved and adapted to black people’s individualist claims. They learned to reconcile their individualism with their racial chauvinism by becoming color-evasive. This transformation precipitated a

new way of ordering society racially. Whereas Jim Crow proscribed and prescribed, legally, what kinds of public spaces were accessible to people of color, the new racial order conceded that such interdictions were contrary to the American value of liberal individualism. The old system exalted whiteness, unapologetically. The new system honored only the raceless “individual.” On the one hand, this was a win for civil rights activists. On the other, because this individualist ideology was anti-structural, it meant that white Houstonians who desired to resist racial progress could repel change based on their individual right to avoid social contact with others, for whatever reason. That “reason” was often bounded up in questions of sexuality and crime.

For civil rights politics that focused on equal opportunity in housing, employment, and education, the underlying philosophy of liberal individualism helped black Houstonians make convincing arguments to their fellow citizens and the courts. However, it proved detrimental to making progress on issues of crime. In the 1950s, as migration to the Sunbelt intensified and federal highway projects changed the structure of black neighborhoods, black communities in the city experienced disproportionately high indigence. Frustrated by the crimes that accompanied these circumstances, including murder, theft, robbery, and assault, black leaders expressed the need for more efficient policing and cultural transformation in black families. They decried what they viewed as a culture of depravity, even as they, nearly with the same pen stroke, pointed out the persistent disadvantages black Houstonians faced in housing, education, and employment. They acknowledged these structural issues, but the problem of crime remained, and for them it was most legible as a matter of individual moral failure. Criminality then surfaced as a specifically important discursive space in which non-structuralist approaches to racial injustice reached their rhetorical limit and hence an important space for understanding how white Houstonians—in addition to their claims of

economic independence and property rights—justified the racial delimitation of neighborhoods.

In a *Time* article lauded on the front page of the *Informer* for its exposé about life from a “Negro” perspective, black photographer Gordon Parks expressed the same hope as Wesley, saying, “You can’t walk around with your race piled on your back.” However, with “persistent doubt” he added, “Anyway, that’s what I tell my kids. Maybe I’m just bluffing myself.”¹⁴³ Once civil rights activists could no longer claim that state action and law resulted in segregated schooling and inadequate facilities and funding across district lines, there was little rhetoric left with which to claim an enduring racial injustice. For Houstonians, individualism and market rationality were the philosophical undergirding of the court-enforced “freedom of choice” plan in 1966.¹⁴⁴ That is, racelessness, structured on the norms and terms of liberalism, was susceptible to co-optation by white citizens. Many of them, then, learned to frame their resistance to integration on the basis of individualism, a particularly useful philosophy for maintaining white supremacy when “Negro crime” could be blamed for apparent social inequality in its stead.

Notes

¹ The Houston NAACP would eventually decline again after 1957 when the Texas attorney general won an injunction against the NAACP’s operation in the state. “About,” *NAACP Houston*, n.d., <http://naacphouston.org/about/>; Michael L. Gillette, “National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,” *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ven01>; Aldon D. Morris, *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986), 31; Amilcar Shabazz, “Carter Wesley and the Making of Houston’s Civic Culture Before the Second Reconstruction,” *Houston History Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 8–13.

² “Houston Swim Pool Is Desegregated,” *The Afro American*, June 22, 1963, 8; Malone, “Unannounced and Unexpected”; Robert J. Robertson, *Fair Ways: How Six Black Golfers Won Civil Rights in Beaumont, Texas* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015); “Sears Tells City to Comply with Golf Decision,” *Houston Informer*, May 29, 1954, 1; Thomas R. Cole, *No Color Is My Kind: The Life of Eldrewey Stearns and the Integration of Houston* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997); Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*; Barrie Scardino Bradley, *Houston’s Hermann Park: A Century of Community* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013).

- ³ These mainstream leaders published the city's most popular black newspaper, worked for its most prominent civil rights and civic organizations, and collaborated with amenable white leaders in city politics. They did not represent all black Houstonians, some of whom embraced socialist approaches to issues of inequality. Disagreements between black leaders within and outside the mainstream are explored in chapters 4 and 6.
- ⁴ Wesley, "Segregation's Double Standard," 2; "Thanksgiving: An American Holiday," *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953, sec. 1, 12.
- ⁵ By raceless I do not mean to suggest that black Houstonians looked toward a future without ethnic distinctiveness. They certainly took pride in and enjoyed the cultural productions of black communities. However, race is, by definition, a social hierarchy and a caste system. Therefore, by "raceless" I mean the elimination of that color-coded caste system. "A New Chicago In The Making," n.d., box 2, folder 12, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL; Carter Wesley, "Houston's Better Relations," *Houston Informer*, February 28, 1959, sec. 2, 1; Carter Wesley, "We'll Support Mrs White," *Houston Informer*, October 11, 1958, sec. 1, 2.
- ⁶ Perceptions of appropriate gender roles, performances, and responsibilities were undoubtedly inflected by race and class. White Houstonians and poor Houstonians from any number of racial or ethnic backgrounds would not necessarily share the breadth of the black middle class's beliefs about gender. For some of the best work that uses intersectionality as an analytic to unpack the diversity of gendered beliefs through other vectors of power, see Patricia Hill Collins, "It's All In the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation," *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (August 1, 1998): 62–82, doi:10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01370.x; Phoebe Godfrey, "Bayonets, Brainwashing, and Bathrooms: The Discourse of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Desegregation of Little Rock's Central High," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (April 1, 2003): 42–67, doi:10.2307/40023302; Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); Barbara F. Welke, "When All Women Were White, and All the Blacks Were Men: Gender, Class, Race and the Road to Plessy, 1855-1914," in *When Did Southern Segregation Begin?*, ed. John David Smith (New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001), 133–52; Sally Kitch, *The Specter of Sex: Gendered Foundations of Racial Formation in the United States* (Albany, NY: State Univ. of New York Press, 2009); Bart Landry, *Black Working Wives: Pioneers of the American Family Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).
- ⁷ This is not to say that Carter Wesley's sense of "manly courage," for example, did not suggest that cowardice was a feminine trait. Indeed, there were misogynistic undercurrents in the idea that manliness and courage were synonymous, and an unmatched demand for women's labor in the idea that women should express innate concern for every child. However, these figures did not necessarily articulate an understanding that women could not be courageous nor that men could not be concerned parental figures in the context of a racial community. That is, while they often used the language of the day to articulate their gendered senses of self, these black leaders did not discount the possibilities for other black people, regardless of gender, to contribute to racial uplift. On the relationship between multiple masculinities and femininity see R. W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005). For a more symbolic rendering of masculinities and femininities and a challenge to Connell's more bodily conceptualization of masculinity and femininity, see Mimi Schippers, "Recovering the Feminine Other: Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Hegemony," *Theory and Society* 36, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 85–102.
- ⁸ Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Prose*, 1st ed. (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983).
- ⁹ Carter Wesley was born in Houston on April 29, 1892 and graduated from Fisk University in Nashville with honors in 1917. He served in the United States military in France as a lieutenant during World War I, after which he acquired a law degree in 1922 from Northwestern University. He then moved to Oklahoma where he practiced as a civil rights attorney for five years. In 1927 he invested in the *Houston Informer* and took complete ownership of the newspaper from Charles Richardson in 1930 after which he merged the periodical with the *Texas Freeman*. Historian Charles Orson Cook remarks that Wesley's *Informer* was "the most vocal advocate of African American civil rights in Houston and possibly all of Texas," achieving a circulation of 45,000. The *Informer* reported on a variety of local and national issues,

with news generally written by *Informer* staff and the Associated Negro Press. Wesley staked out space for himself, usually within the first few pages of each weekly issue, for his “Ram’s Horn” column in which he wrote about personal matters and events, highlighted local and national injustices, attacked political figures—usually those who betrayed the interests of blacks as Wesley understood them—and commented on news that he found especially pertinent. A separate editorial page generally consisted of three large columns written by unnamed authors, an occasional space for letters to the editors, syndicated political cartoon by artists like Robert Savon Pious, pieces which generally aimed to highlight racism as a disease threatening American democracy. “Women’s Activities” and “Church Activities” were also sectioned in each issue. Throughout the 1950s, the *Informer* evinced a news and editorial focus on equalization of school funds, fair employment and housing, the power of the ballot box following the demolition of the white primary, access to public services, the need for the state to protect black women from sexual assault, the importance to erase race and color from discourses surrounding crime, police brutality and the exigencies of just accountability for law enforcement officers’ actions, and the manliness of black men during the Korean War. Wesley and his newspaper, like other black publishers and publications in their respective cities, shouldered much of the burden of leading local civil rights publicity and activism before massive protest began in earnest. Alwyn Barr, *The African Texans* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004), 66; Charles O. Cook, “Houston Informer,” in *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Paul Finkelman (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 462–63; Cary D. Wintz, “‘The Struggle for Dignity’: African Americans in Twentieth Century Texas,” in *Twentieth-Century Texas: A Social and Cultural History*, ed. John W. Storey and Mary L. Scheer (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2008), 87.

¹⁰ Disagreement in this rich scholarship on whiteness has often hinged on the question of whether white people’s newfound commitment to colorblind individualism was a smokescreen for white supremacist beliefs they still maintained, or if it was a genuine shift in identity. David Freund makes the most convincing argument here, noting that race and class are intersectional. As Jim Crow withered away, racism evolved as did white identity. Whiteness became wrapped up in homeownership, a symbol of individual attainment for them. He argues that white people *really* believed that their individual merit brought them the prosperity they witnessed in post-War America. Whereas Freund (and Matthew Lassiter as well) focuses on these changes in white identity as somewhat subconscious responses to structural changes in American society, Kevin Kruse goes a step farther and argues that white Atlantans embrace of “colorblind” individualism was a conscious response to black people’s successful civil rights gains. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*; Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Kruse, *White Flight*. Also see DeSena, *Protecting One’s Turf*; John W. Frazier, Florence M. Margai, and Eugene Tettey-Fio, *Race and Place: Equity Issues in Urban America* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2003); Ian F. Haney López, “‘A Nation of Minorities’: Race, Ethnicity, and Reactionary Colorblindness,” *Stanford Law Review* 59, no. 4 (February 1, 2007): 985–1063; Michael K. Brown et al., *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

¹¹ Sociologist Ruth Frankenberg’s *White Women, Race Matters* broke ground when it uncovered the intricate ways white women from a variety of backgrounds learned to understand their whiteness through a “dominant discourse” of power- and color-evasion that eventually emerged from a nearly century-long transition from biological racism to ethnocentric racism. Their “color-blind” convictions, Frankenberg points out, can be more accurately understood as aversions to dealing with race, rather than blindness, *per se*. Whether the women in her study were “confusing desire with reality, ‘ought’ with ‘is,’” or if their words represented “intentional evasion or denial” was a question worth asking, and Frankenberg found evidence of both. This allowed them, and other people invested in whiteness or liberal individualism more broadly, to “view people in terms of universal sameness overlaid with individual difference” and therefore to avoid “think[ing] in terms of social or political aggregates.” Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988), 15 (first quote), 148 (remaining quotes).

¹² Quentin R. Mease to Roy Wilkins, June 20, 1955, Papers of the NAACP, Part 26: Branch Department Files, Series A: The South, Houston, Texas Branch Operations, January-July 1955, ProQuest History Vault. Upon receipt of their complaints, the National Office explained that Adair was not qualified to hold her position, despite that she had been working in it without a salary for five years. The qualifications

included that NAACP Executive Secretaries must be younger than 50 years old, must have completed a college degree in "political science, sociology, public administration, or allied fields," and must have "knowledge and experience in public relations, administration, and organization, preferably in fields similar to NAACP, such as social work, government, labor, welfare, etc." On all counts, then, Adair did not meet the requisite requirements. Additional complaints included that she had "not maintained NAACP standards," was "incapable of handling the duties" of her position, and that she sent out correspondences that were "poorly typed" with misspelled words and of low quality. They also noted "personality factors" which were not listed in detail. However, despite the opposition and White's efforts to "wrest control of the branch from Adair," Adair remained in her position through the end of the decade after an outpouring of support from local civic club, church, and organized labor leaders, lay members and board members of the local NAACP, and influential business people sent letters in support of Adair's work, including that she had "helped this branch out of debt of \$1800 that was incurred during Mrs. Lula B. White's administration." Lulu B. White to A. Maceo Smith, December 1954, Papers of the NAACP, Part 26: Branch Department Files, Series A: The South, Houston, Texas Branch Operations, 1954, ProQuest History Vault; "Draft of Houston Branch Request," n.d., Ibid., August-December 1955; Gloster B. Current to L. H. Simpson, March 30, 1955, Papers of the NAACP, Ibid., January-July 1955; Rannie Durden Cook to Roy Wilkins, June 21, 1955, Ibid. Researchers should consult all records in the aforementioned NAACP folder to reconstruct the turmoil in the Houston NAACP in 1955. Also see Merline Pitre's well-researched account *In Struggle against Jim Crow: Lulu B. White and the NAACP, 1900-1957* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010), 117-28.

¹³ Carter Wesley to Thurgood Marshall, January 9, 1947, Papers of the NAACP, Part 18. Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A: Legal Department Files, Carter Wesley, Houston Informer, 1946-1947, ProQuest History Vault.

¹⁴ Adair was born on October 22, 1893. Her mother, Ada Crosby Daniels, was "of a mixed parentage." Her grandfather was white, but "he must have been in love with my grandmother," Adair recounted, "because she died in childbirth and left him with two little girls and he could have walked off and left them." Her grandfather had a hard time finding a home for Adair because "there was a time when Negro children who were of mulatto color or very fair, were not looked up and loved like children of darker skin. They pulled her hair and made fun of her and used vulgar language to her about her parentage and things like that." However, he did find a home, and those godparents became the only grandparents Adair ever knew. All quotes attributed to Adair and the details of her life have been gleaned from the Black Women Oral History Project unless otherwise noted. Christia Adair and Dorothy R. Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project, September 1977, Box 4, folder 1, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ This, of course, is the problem Kimberlé Crenshaw addresses via intersectionality. Kimberlé Crenshaw,

“Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics,” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* 1989, no. 1 (1989): 139–67.

²⁹ In 1963, feminist Betty Friedan described the listlessness, hopelessness, and depression that many American women faced after their relegation to domestic life after the end of World War II. They traded their power for patronage, relying on men for their financial well-being as they grew weary of boring lives where domestic labor was handled by servants, and increasingly, machines. She wrote, “The problem that has no name stirring in the minds of so many American women today is not a matter of a loss of femininity or too much education, or the demands domesticity.... We can longer ignore that voice within women that says: ‘I want something more than my husband and my children and my home.’” Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1963), 22.

³⁰ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project; “Botkin Indicted on Murder County,” *Galveston Daily News*, May 3, 1930, 4; “Harris County Juvenile Probation Records CR43 (1913 – 1989) [Finding Aid],” n.d., Harris County Archives, <http://www.cclerk.hctx.net/harriscountyarchives/doc/Records/FA-Juvenile2CR43.pdf>. No scholar has completed work on the Dorcas Home, though as the only institution to serve black youth within the criminal justice system of Harris County, it is worthy of some exploration. The Harris County Archives will probably be the richest source of information. The *Houston Informer* will offer the best chance to get at how black Houstonians saw and engaged with the school. In 1921, for example, editorialists at the *Informer* wondered: “Did you ever hear the story of the rotten apple in the barrel? We can’t throw these girls out of our group—they are human beings and of our own blood. We can’t afford to let them disintegrate by vitiating it. We’ve got to reclaim and reform them. What, then are you going to do about Dorcas home?.... [T]he institution has never had a fair chance. It has received a total of \$2,700 a year appropriation from the city and county combined, plus private, club and church contributions totaling not over \$2,300—a sum total of \$5,000, to house, clothe, feed and teach from fourteen to twenty girls and young women and maintain a matron and assistant. It has never had a good location, it has never had proper attention from its own people, it has never had proper support.” “Dorcas Home’s Future at Stake; Will Race Fall Down on the Job?,” *Houston Informer*, March 19, 1921, 7.

³¹ The Conroe case was the trial of Bob White, a black Houston plantation worker who was coerced into a false confession that he raped a white woman in August 1937. White won several appeals, including one which challenged the prosecution’s prejudice and one which acknowledged that his “confession” had been forced. Before his innocence was proven, White was killed by the alleged victim’s husband, who shot him in the back of the head in a Montgomery County courtroom. See *White v. State*, 139 Tex. Crim. 660 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1940); Randolph Boehm, “Papers of the NAACP, Part 08: Discrimination in the Criminal Justice System, 1910-1955, Series A & B: Legal Department and Central Office Records” (University Publications of America, 1982), Kelley Center for Government Information, Data, and Geospatial Services, Fondren Library, Rice University.

³² Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project; “Adair, Christia V.,” n.d., Houston Oral History Project MSS0109, Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library. On the Morris case, see Chapter 4.

³³ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project. Adair’s relationship with White would eventually become fraught when the latter woman believed Adair was trying to usurp her position.

³⁴ E. O. Smith was an educator and co-founder of the Houston NAACP. Among other successes, he helped black Houstonians establish the Colored Library Association, which led to the establishment of the Negro Carnegie Library in Houston. Sid Hilliard was a real estate dealer and founder of the Harris County Council of Organizations, a group that brought together the efforts of various civil rights organizations in the county on converging issues. In 1925, Lee Haywood Simpson became the presiding pastor at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church in Fifth Ward and was the leader of the Colored Baptist Minister’s Association in 1939 until the late 1960s. Patricia Smith Prather, “Smith, Ernest Ollington,” *The Handbook of Texas Online* | *Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsm83>; Fayrene Neuman Mays, “A History of Public Library Service to Negroes in Houston, Texas, 1907-1962” (M.A. Thesis, Atlanta University, 1964), 20;

Study and Investigation of Housing: Hearings before the Joint Committee on Housing Eightieth Congress, First Session, 1948; "Rev. Lee Haywood Simpson: An Inventory of His Records at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library," n.d., <http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/houpub/00011/hpub-00011.html>.

³⁵ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project. Adair may have overstated her successes, which were at best uneven. At times she witnessed very successful membership drives, but at other times she had to field complaints concerning a failure to find as many new members as possible and to process the membership cards of those who had recently donated to the organization. In general, though, when she came under fire, Adair found a swell of support among black leaders and NAACP members in Houston. Gloster B. Current to C.V. Adair, November 14, 1951, Papers of the NAACP, Part 25: Branch Department Files, Series A: Regional Files and Special Reports, 1941-1955, Group II, Series C, ProQuest History Vault; C.V. Adair to Lucille Black, January 21, 1955, *Ibid.*; Lucille Black to C.V. Adair, January 12, 1955, *Ibid.*; Hobart Taylor to Roy Wilkins, June 21, 1955, *Ibid.*; Lulu B. White, "Greetings from Houston Branch N.A.A.C.P.," December 23, 1954, *Ibid.*

³⁶ Adair said she bought the girdle "because that would be carrying it too far" to not buy the girdle and perhaps reinforce the idea that black people were agitators rather than paying customers. Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project. I borrow the phrase "struggle against Jim Crow" from historian Merline Pitre, whose work on Lulu B. White has done a great service to black women's history. Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow*.

³⁷ "Small p" politics are social interactions, like Adair's in Sakowitz with the clerk, wherein actors unassociated with the state act in ways that (attempt to) manipulate power relations between subjects and within spaces. "Big p" politics refers specifically to those same kinds of conflicts over power, space, and place, but where government-empowered and state-sanctioned players are involved. Carolyn Gallaher, *Key Concepts in Political Geography* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2009), 11.

³⁸ On the legal battle to end the white Democratic primary in Texas, see Charles L. Zelden, *The Battle for the Black Ballot: Smith v. Allwright and the Defeat of the Texas All-White Primary* (Lawrence, Ka.: University Press of Kansas, 2004); Darlene Clark Hine, *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas* (Columbia: University of Missouri, 2003); Michael J. Klarman, "White Primary Rulings: A Case Study in the Consequences of Supreme Court Decisionmaking," *Florida State University Law Review* 29, no. 1 (2001): 55-107.

³⁹ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Specifically, Houston came under fire through the enforcement of President Truman's executive order that provided for the Committee on Government Contract Compliance. See: Harry S. Truman, "Executive Order 10308, Improving the Means for Obtaining Compliance with the Nondiscrimination Provisions of Federal Contracts," December 3, 1951, Harry S. Truman Library and Museum, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://trumanlibrary.org/executiveorders/index.php?pid=276>.

⁴² "Dual Airport Facilities Condemned By CAA," *Houston Informer*, December 8, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 6; "Citizens Expose Bias At Airport: City Blamed," *Houston Informer*, October 6, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 10; Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 45.

⁴³ "Dual Airport Facilities Condemned By CAA," 1.

⁴⁴ "Adair, Christia V."

⁴⁵ Mrs. C.V. Adair, "Annual Report of Branch Activities," January 15, 1954, 16, Papers of the NAACP Part 26: Selected Branch Files, 1940-1955, Series A: The South, Group II, Series C, folder Houston, Texas 1954, ProQuest History Vault; "Interview of Fred Hofheinz, May 21, 1987 Former Mayor of Houston."

Adair also worked to desegregate other public spaces. Sometimes Jim Crow was more "ugly" and "uncomfortable," because of the ways it highlighted the sheer lack of regard whites had for black lives and well-being. One such case was segregation at the Veterans Administration Hospital (located at about 2000 Holcombe Boulevard in the Texas Medical Center), where black patients could not use the

swimming pool, despite their prescribed therapies. And black men “would have to go for days and days without shaving,” because they were not permitted into the hospital’s barber shop. When the hospital announced to the public that it would like volunteers to help with rolling bandages, delivering literature, and other such “little courtesies and things for the patient,” Adair organized several women. They were rebuffed at the door, told that the hospital “didn’t need any help, that kind of help, at all.” Adair did not let the issue rest, and also set her sights on discrimination in regards to the swimming pool. “We had several things that happened with the VA Hospital,” she recalled, “that finally I think the man lost his job.” Additionally, Adair participated in the fight to desegregate Houston’s libraries. Black Houstonians were limited to using Carnegie Library in the Fourth Ward, which had a limited collection and would have been a fairly lengthy journey for Houstonians traveling from Third Ward, and even longer for those traveling from Fifth Ward. Hofheinz proved to be an ally here as well; he called Adair personally “early one morning,” and said to her, “Mrs. Adair, this is not healthy news for publication so I would like for you... the first thing you do, I would like for you to notify the high school principals and your reading public to go to the library and get their library cards.” He continued, “Mrs. Adair, the city libraries are open to everybody.” Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project.

⁴⁶ Barbara Karkabi, “‘Fire in Her Belly’: Hundreds Honor Lifelong Civil-Rights Fight” (*Houston Chronicle*, June 8, 1990), Box 4, folder 1, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL. Of course, in some ways, to invoke Rosa Parks’s name is to flatten the ways she and Adair were different. The moniker participates in the sanitization of Rosa Parks’s work and her legacy as an anti-rape investigator and activist who frequently put her own safety on the line in order to confront white men’s sexual violence against black women in the South. See Danielle L. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance—A New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010).

⁴⁷ C.V. Adair to Sound Off, *Houston Post*, March 24, 1959, Box 4, folder 9, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Jane Douglas to Ruby Kendrick, March 13, 1952, Records of the National Association of Colored Women’s Clubs, 1895-1992, Part 1: Minutes of National Conventions, Publications, and President’s Office Correspondence; Adair to Sound Off, *Houston Post*, March 24, 1959. Adair’s reference to “slavery time language” refers to the ways southerners, both prior to and after the Civil War, believed that black people in the South had been differently and appropriately socialized to exist within particularly southern white supremacist regimes. Northern black folk, in their imagination, had been spoiled by the seemingly more lax racial customs and practices of a region that had not kept black folk submissive in ways white southerners were accustomed to. On “outside interference” and “our Negroes,” see examples in primary and discussions in secondary sources: David Turley, *American Religion: Literary Sources and Documents* (Mountfield, U.K.: Helm Information Ltd, 1998); *Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 88th Congress* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963); Jason Sokol, *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-1975* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008); W. E. B. Du Bois, *Crisis*, vol. 9 (New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1914); Richard S. Newman, “Prelude to the Gag Rule: Southern Reaction to Antislavery Petitions in the First Federal Congress,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 4 (December 1, 1996): 571–99, doi:10.2307/3124418; Charles W. Eagles, *The Price of Defiance: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).

⁵⁰ A. McFarland to C.V. Adair, March 31, 1959, Box 4, folder 9, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL.

⁵¹ Historian George Washington Williams confirms the logical argument, if not the exact facts of Adair’s account. He noted that historians had far underestimated how early Africans could be found in records for Massachusetts. The earliest reference he noted was in 1633. George Washington Williams, *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens; Together with a Preliminary Consideration of the Unity of the Human Family, an Historical Sketch of Africa, and an Account of the Negro Governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1882). Also see: Christopher Alain Cameron, “Freeing Themselves: Puritanism, Slavery, and Black Abolitionists in Massachusetts, 1641-

- 1788" (M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008), 10.
- ⁵² C.V. Adair to A. McFarland, April 1959, Box 4, folder 9, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL.
- ⁵³ C.V. Adair to Sound Off, *Houston Post*, June 21, 1961, Box 4, folder 9, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL.
- ⁵⁴ Adair to McFarland, April 1959.
- ⁵⁵ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project (quote). Also see how black journalists described the city in the 1950s in terms of its race relations and its economic opportunity, and note that other scholars have identified this trend in Houston's mid-century reputation relative to other southern cities: Louie Robinson, "Jet Visits Houston," *Jet*, March 17, 1955, 10–15; "Houston Comes Through," *Houston Informer*, May 24, 1952, sec. 2, 2; Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*; Ruthe Winegarten, *Black Texas Women: 150 Years of Trial and Triumph* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010); Haynes, *A Night of Violence*.
- ⁵⁶ Carter Wesley, "Negroes Not Wanted," *Houston Informer*, January 10, 1953, sec. 1, 3; Robb Walsh, "The Barbecue Ward," *Houston Press*, June 13, 2002, <http://www.houstonpress.com/restaurants/the-barbecue-ward-6593515>.
- ⁵⁷ The *Informer* insisted that Jim Crow was inconsistent with "the teachings of Christianity to which the nation subscribes." Also see "Leadership From San Antonio," *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, sec. 1, 14. For a discussion on bourgeois individualism see James D. Young, *Socialism Since 1889: A Biographical History* (London: Pinter, 1988). For more on blacks and liberal individualism see bell hooks, *Killing Rage: Ending Racism* (New York: H. Holt and Co, 1995); James Todd Uhlman, "Geographies of Desire: Bayard Taylor and the Romance of Travel in Bourgeois American Culture 1820-1880" (Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 2007).
- ⁵⁸ Wesley, "Negroes Not Wanted," 3.
- ⁵⁹ "Gov. White Says Private Schools Won't Solve School Issue," *Houston Informer*, December 12, 1953, sec. 1, 1; Carter Wesley, "State's Rights," *Houston Informer*, December 12, 1953, sec. 1, 10.
- ⁶⁰ "Thanksgiving: An American Holiday," 12.
- ⁶¹ "Negroes Are Americans First," *Houston Informer*, October 23, 1954, sec. 1, 12.
- ⁶² See David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1919-1963: The Fight for Equality and the American Century* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000), 266–348.
- ⁶³ Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn," *Houston Informer*, November 7, 1953, sec. 1, 3.
- ⁶⁴ "Freedom of Choice," *Houston Informer*, May 1, 1954, sec. 1, 12. On "Man" as a Western, liberal individualist construct, see Alexander G. Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014).
- ⁶⁵ "Buy Negro," *Houston Informer*, June 13, 1953, 12.
- ⁶⁶ "Everybody's Business," *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ "Buy Negro," 12.
- ⁶⁹ John Egerton, *Speak Now Against The Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South*, (New York: Knopf, 2013), 314.
- ⁷⁰ W. Marvin Dulaney, "Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas?," in *Essays on the American Civil Rights Movement*, ed. John Dittmer et al. (College Station: Published for University of Texas at Arlington by Texas A&M University Press, 1993), 73.
- ⁷¹ Egerton, *Speak Now Against The Day*, 252–53.
- ⁷² *Sweatt v. Painter* was taken to the Supreme Court in the name of Heman Marion Sweatt, who had been denied admission to the University of Texas at Austin's School of Law. The Supreme Court decided that, building on the precedent they had set with *McLaurin v. Oklahoma Board of Regents* (1950), "intangible"

factors were crucial to education, and the establishment of a law school at Texas Southern University in Houston did not provide adequate equal opportunity to the plaintiff. *Sweatt v. Painter*, 339 U.S. 629 (Supreme Court of the United States 1950); Gary M. Lavergne, *Before Brown: Heman Marion Sweatt, Thurgood Marshall, and the Long Road to Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010); Dwonna Goldstone, "Heman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law," *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 54 (December 1, 2006): 88–97, doi:10.2307/25073597. On Wesley's relationship with the NAACP, see Philip F. Rubio, *There's Always Work at the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice, and Equality* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 95.

⁷³ Lavergne, *Before Brown*, 116; Wesley to Marshall, January 9, 1947.

⁷⁴ Richard Kluger, *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality* (New York: Vintage Books, 2004).

⁷⁵ Pitre, In Struggle Against Jim Crow; Lavergne, *Before Brown*, 115 (quote).

⁷⁶ Rubio, *There's Always Work at the Post Office*, 141.

⁷⁷ Lavergne, *Before Brown*, 213.

⁷⁸ R. Scott Baker, *Paradoxes of Desegregation: African American Struggles for Educational Equity in Charleston, South Carolina, 1926-1972* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006).

⁷⁹ Walter Vaught, "Our Reader's Write," *Houston Informer*, August 29, 1953, sec. 1, 12.

⁸⁰ Lisa Aldred and Thurgood Marshall, *Thurgood Marshall: Supreme Court Justice*, ed. Heather Lehr Wagner and Nathan Irvin Huggins (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Pub., 2004), 59; Kluger, *Simple Justice*, 519–42.

⁸¹ Charles L. Zelden, *Thurgood Marshall: Race, Rights, and the Struggle for a More Perfect Union* (New York: Routledge, 2013), 62 (quote); Merline Pitre, "Black Houstonians and the 'Separate but Equal' Doctrine: Carter Wesley versus Lulu B. White," in *The African American Experience in Texas: An Anthology*, ed. Bruce A. Glasrud and James Smallwood (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007), 302–17.

⁸² Kluger, *Simple Justice*.

⁸³ "Supervisors Know About Conditions in Schools," *Houston Informer*, February 28, 1953, sec. 1, 10.

⁸⁴ "School Business Is Your Business," *Houston Informer*, March 7, 1953, sec. 1, 8.

⁸⁵ "Group Presses for School Improvement," *Houston Informer*, April 11, 1953, sec. 1, 10.

⁸⁶ "Negro Schools Head Moves to 'New' Office," *Houston Informer*, September 5, 1953, sec. 1, 1.

⁸⁷ "School Problems to the Fore," *Houston Informer*, September 19, 1953.

⁸⁸ "School Election: November 14," *Houston Informer*, November 7, 1953. Particularly important from the February 23rd meeting for Wesley and the *Informer* as both news and editorial fodder, though, was the back-and-forth story concerning the board's refusal to accept Superintendent Moreland's recommendation to look into the Lamar Fleming Estate, land near Texas Southern University that had been reportedly been offered to HISD, at a cost, on which a new black high school could be built. This issue would recede while the debate over equalization took precedence, but it would not disappear for long. Lamar Fleming Jr. was a wealthy and influential business owner in Houston. James A. Tinsley, "Fleming, Lamar Jr.," *Handbook of Texas Online* (Published by Texas State Historical Association, June 12, 2010), <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ffl09>.

⁸⁹ It has been typical throughout the history of segregation for black Americans to pay more than their fair share of taxes to receive minimal service, effectively subsidizing white-only property and white-only schools, among other institutions, services, and state-funded benefits that black people have been less apt to take advantage of due to system-wide discriminatory practices. Historian Andrew Kahrl argues, "[B]lack property owners in the Jim Crow South were often taxed at a higher effective rate than their white counterparts to support public institutions and services that African Americans were denied access to (or were provided on a separate and unequal basis) and to pay the salaries of public officials who did not represent and were not accountable to black citizens" Andrew W. Kahrl, "The Power to

Destroy: Discriminatory Property Assessments and the Struggle for Tax Justice in Mississippi,” *Journal of Southern History* 82, no. 3 (August 2016): 581. On a history of black people being taxed double to pay for white-only schools, see James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988); and Vanessa Siddle Walker, *Their Highest Potential: An African American School Community in the Segregated South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996).

⁹⁰ “37 Escape Classroom Cave-In: Ceiling Falls after Pupils Go to Lunch,” *Houston Informer*, March 13, 1954, 1.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² “Room for School Expansion,” *Houston Informer*, April 10, 1954, sec. 1, 12.

⁹³ “Citizens Demand New Schools: ‘Stop Trifling Around’ Leaders Tell Officials,” *Houston Informer*, March 27, 1954, sec. 1, 1, 10. The calculations are reflected in the map. Exact numbers can be found by looking at Part 38 in the 1950 U.S. Census block statistics for Houston, and blocks 59-63, 83, 88, and 98 for black residents, and 100-102 for white residents.

⁹⁴ Carter Wesley, “Hot School Issues Arouses Citizens,” *Houston Informer*, April 3, 1954, sec. 1, 10.

⁹⁵ “Spotlight on Negro Schools,” *Houston Informer*, November 7, 1953, sec. 1, 12.

⁹⁶ “Public School Neglect,” *Houston Informer*, April 10, 1954, sec. 1, 12.

⁹⁷ “School Board in Reverse on Negro High School Site,” *Houston Informer*, October 2, 1954, sec. 1, 20.

⁹⁸ Lavergne, *Before Brown*, 112; Wesley to Marshall, January 9, 1947; Carter Wesley to Local Branch NAACP, January 17, 1947, Papers of the NAACP, Part 18. Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A: Legal Department Files, Carter Wesley, *Houston Informer*, 1946-1947, ProQuest History Vault; Carter Wesley to Thurgood Marshall, January 18, 1947, Papers of the NAACP, Part 18. Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A: Legal Department Files, Carter Wesley, *Houston Informer*, 1946-1947, ProQuest History Vault; Carter Wesley to Thurgood Marshall, January 28, 1947, Papers of the NAACP, Part 18. Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A: Legal Department Files, Carter Wesley, *Houston Informer*, 1946-1947, ProQuest History Vault.

⁹⁹ Letter reprinted in Michael G. Long, *Marshalling Justice: The Early Civil Rights Letters of Thurgood Marshall* (New York: Amistad, 2011), 186–87.

¹⁰⁰ For a treatise on liberal utilitarianism, see John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism,” *Utilitarianism: Past, Present and Future*, n.d., <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm>.

¹⁰¹ Robertson, *Fair Ways*, 8.

¹⁰² About a month after *Brown* was decided, the San Antonio city council realized that there were no laws that designated swimming pools as segregated. Custom had designated ten of the city’s twelve pools for whites only and the remaining two for black patrons. When six black males, two adults and four young boys, joined the crowd of white swimmers in the Woodlawn Pool—at which they remained for only twenty minutes—the white people jumped out and the following day all of the city’s pools were closed for “cleaning and repairs.” R. L. Lester, mayor *pro tempore*, called the council to a special Saturday morning meeting, where they decided, after three hours, in a 5-2 vote, to create an ordinance that would legally designate city pools by race. The council told the public that this decision was “advisable in order to prevent violence, conserve the peace, and to protect the safety and welfare of citizens.” “Negroes Swim in City Pool; Pool Closed,” *Houston Informer*, July 3, 1953, sec. 1, 1; “Texas City Closes 12 Pools After Negroes Use One,” *Jet*, July 1, 1954, 4; Jon Ford, “Pools Closed to Negroes, Council Approves Race Segregation,” *San Antonio Express*, June 20, 1954, sec. 1, 8A; “Old Race Policy Break-up Begins,” *The California Eagle*, June 24, 1954, 3.

¹⁰³ Quoted in Robertson, *Fair Ways*, 87.

¹⁰⁴ For a discussion of the difference between utilitarianism and pragmatism see Richard A. Posner, *Law, Pragmatism, and Democracy* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 2005), 85.

¹⁰⁵ For a brilliantly executed historical exploration on the emergence of the public sphere in Western

society, see Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*, 7.

¹⁰⁶ Carter Wesley, "How They Fish," *Houston Informer*, June 27, 1954, 3.

¹⁰⁷ For further discussion on hegemonic and multiple masculinities, see R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt, "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept," *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2005): 829–59.

¹⁰⁸ Neil Gary Sapper, "A Survey of the History of the Black People of Texas, 1930-1954" (Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1972), 456 (first quote).

¹⁰⁹ Carter Wesley, "Carter Wesley Changed," *Houston Informer*, November 10, 1956, sec. 1, 2.

¹¹⁰ *Brown v. Board* (1954) was collapsed with four other cases: *Bolling v. Sharpe* (Washington, DC), *Briggs v. Elliott* (SC), *Davis v. County School Board of Prince Edward County* (VA), and *Gebhart v. Belton* (DE). For an exhaustive and engaging study of *Brown*, see Kluger, *Simple Justice*.

¹¹¹ Kellar, Make Haste Slowly.

¹¹² Carter Wesley, "A Questing Mind," *Houston Informer*, March 5, 1956, sec. 1, 24. On Houstonians' general sense of pride in the progress the Texas Medical Center and highway construction represented for them and the city, see William Henry Kellar, *Enduring Legacy: The M.D. Anderson Foundation & the Texas Medical Center* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014); McKinney, "Superhighway Deluxe"; Erik Slotboom, *Houston Freeways: A Historical and Visual Journey* (O.F. Slotboom, 2003).

¹¹³ J. Rueben Sheeler, "[Untitled Lecture]" June 21, 1961, Box 4, folder 9, The J. Reuben Sheeler Collection. MSS 268, HMRC, HPL.

¹¹⁴ "Warns Of Plan To Stir Up Violence," *Houston Informer*, October 12, 1957, sec. 1, 1.

¹¹⁵ Carter Wesley, "Let's Not Panic," *Houston Informer*, October 19, 1957, sec. 2, 2. On the *Informer's* editorialization of the situation in Clinton, TN, see "Riots Show Need For Positive Leadership," *Houston Informer*, September 8, 1956, sec. 1, 12.

¹¹⁶ Wesley, "Houston's Better Relations," 1.

¹¹⁷ All details and quotes attributed to White can be found in her oral history interview, unless otherwise noted. Hattie Mae White, Houston Oral History Project, interview by Louis J. Marchiafava, August 9, 1974, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library, <http://digital.houstonlibrary.org/cdm/ref/collection/Interviews/id/442>.

¹¹⁸ "Mrs Charles White Story In Good Housekeeping Mag," *Houston Informer*, September 19, 1959, sec. 1, 4 (all quotes).

¹¹⁹ Harry K. Wright, Civil Rights U.S.A., Public Schools, Southern States, 1963, Texas: Staff Report (The Commission, 1964), 79.

¹²⁰ "Mrs White, Mother Of Five, Has Investment In Schools," *Houston Informer*, November 1, 1958, sec. 1, 1.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*

¹²² "Mrs. Charles White Stresses Common Bond At E O Smith," *Houston Informer*, November 15, 1958, sec. 2, 1.

¹²³ Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn," *Houston Informer*, November 1, 1958, sec. 2, 1. Hattie Mae White's vision, like Christia Adair's and Carter Wesley's, was structured by her gendered conception of self. William Peters, "Houston's Quiet Victory," *Good Housekeeping*, October 1959, 107.

¹²⁴ "White Supporters Contribute to Mrs White," *Houston Informer*, November 1, 1958, sec. 2, 12.

¹²⁵ Carter Wesley, "Whites, Negroes Unite To Elect Mrs. C E White," *Houston Informer*, November 8, 1958, sec. 1, 1 (first quote); "A Negro On a Southern School Board--A Quite Victory!," *Houston Informer*, September 19, 1959, sec. 1, 4 (second quote).

¹²⁶ William Hampton and Rufus Clement were elected to school boards in Greensboro, North Carolina and Atlanta, respectively, in 1952. C. J. Sutton was the first black person to serve on the San Antonio

Union Junior College District Board of Trustees, elected in 1948. Other southern cities were quite late, including New Orleans, which elected Dr. Mack J. Spears, their first black member, to the Orleans Parish School Board in 1968. Dallasites came on board even later, finally electing Kathlyn Gilliam to their school board in 1974. Adam Fairclough, *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890-2000*, Reprint edition (New York: Penguin Books, 2002), 204; Jewel L. Prestage and Franklin D. Jones, "Contemporary Black Texas Women: Political and Educational Leadership, 1974-2000," in *Black Women in Texas History*, ed. Bruce A. Glasrud and Merline Pitre (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008), 204; "Dr. Spears Elected to New Orleans School Board," *Jet*, December 6, 1968, 28; Avi Selk, "Kathlyn Gilliam, Civil Rights Advocate and First Black Woman on Dallas ISD Board, Dies," *Dallas News*, December 11, 2011, <http://www.dallasnews.com/obituaries/obituaries/2011/12/11/kathlyn-gilliam-civil-rights-advocate-and-first-black-woman-on-dallas-isd-board-dies>.

¹²⁷ Wesley, "Whites, Negroes Unite To Elect Mrs. C E White," 1, 10 (all quotes); On conservative support for Hattie Mae White see Carter Wesley, "Count Shows Mrs. White Elected By All Shades," *Houston Informer*, November 22, 1958, sec. 1, 1, 10.

¹²⁸ "Mrs Charles White Story," 4 (all quotes).

¹²⁹ J. E. B. Logan, "The 1896 Stand of Supreme Court Satisfied Mr Logan," *Houston Post*, July 25, 1955, Box 3, folder 6, Christia V. Adair Collection MSS 109, HMRC, HPL; Biographical information for Logan confirmed in "1940 U.S. Federal Population Census (Enumeration District: 258-13, Sheet 14B)" (Houston, Harris, Texas, n.d.), Publication No. T627, National Archives and Records Administration, <http://heritagequestonline.com>.

¹³⁰ White, Houston Oral History Project.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

¹³² *Ibid.*

¹³³ *Ibid.*

¹³⁴ James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 179.

¹³⁵ White, Houston Oral History Project.

¹³⁶ "Business And Professional Men Salute Mrs C W White," *Houston Informer*, November 15, 1958, sec. 1, 1.

¹³⁷ Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 110; Winegarten, *Black Texas Women*, e-book.

¹³⁸ But White's supporters remained hopeful, and altogether, White's time on the school board demonstrated the social and political interconnectedness necessary for a successful civil rights strategy. She noted that being a school board member "is a job and requires a lot of research and reading, a lot of big words, a lot of calling on, answering calls from community people for whatever they wanted, speaking, being able to raise money for this cause or to give advice." And it was a great responsibility, because the decisions she and the other board members made affected the life chances of entire communities. The "weighty" nature of the work required, in White's opinion, the support of "good, solid citizens" who could provide sound advice, even if she did not always agree, from the outset, with their position. She depended on Kraft for a great deal of reasoning, as they discussed and contended with each other over various issues. She also leaned on the support of her friends Joe Marks and Hugh and Mary Leach, whom she consulted, especially when she needed advice on how to politic and perform as a public figure. Joe Teeter, a local attorney, provided her pro bono legal advice throughout her tenure as a board member. Lonnie Smith, the plaintiff in *Smith v. Allwright*, among other politically active Houstonians, supported White's efforts to integrate the district's schools. Despite the challenges she faced from the conservative members of the school board, White's election proved to her and others that Houstonians were ready for a future where race would no longer determine opportunity. A black elevator operator believed that White's win meant "that if the school board won't integrate the schools, the people will integrate the school board." Wesley believed that "the people" of Houston were "way ahead" of the city's politicians and the school board, and this sense of Houstonians' progressiveness reinforced his vision of an integrated, color-rejecting future. Peters, "Houston's Quiet

Victory," 106; Wesley, "Houston's Better Relations," 1.

¹³⁹ Carter Wesley to Thurgood Marshall, December 23, 1946, Papers of the NAACP, Part 18. Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A: Legal Department Files, Carter Wesley, Houston Informer, 1946-1947, ProQuest History Vault.

¹⁴⁰ White to Smith, December 1954; Lulu B. White to Claude A. Barnett, July 15, 1955, The Claude A. Barnett Papers, 1918-1967, Series 2: Africa and Other Foreign Interests, 1925-1966, folder 252247-187-0006, ProQuest History Vault.

¹⁴¹ Wesley's *Informer* made repeated appeals to black Houstonians as a real racial group with collective interest. For example, later in January of 1953 the editorialists wrote that the individual Negro, John Doe, "wants jobs for qualified Negroes, he wants an economy that enables him to make personal progress, he wants equal educational opportunities," and he shares these exigencies, which they called the "Negro 'bill of particulars,'" with other blacks. John Doe's interests were individualistic, but his existing limitations were inextricably bound to the group to which he had been designated under the law. Thus, the *Informer* read, "The Negro vote *does* exist, and will exist *as long as* the group has vital problems peculiar to itself [my emphases]." Collective racial identity was a temporary construct employable only because of discrimination. He went to the poll and placed his ballot as an individual, but John Doe voted in the booth as a Negro because he had Negro interests. Further work, beyond the abolishment of the white primary, would be necessary before he could vote as an individual. Indeed, in response to the school over-enrollment crisis and the Dodson-Lamar Fleming building site ordeal, Wesley pressed that "individual protests in isolated instances" were not going to be sufficient in resolving the problem; black Houstonians would have to use group identity to fight inequality. Upon victory, the collective would dissipate as an entity and individuals would remain. "Republican Patronage," *Houston Informer*, January 10, 1953, sec. 1, 8; "Have You Paid Your Poll Tax?," *Houston Informer*, January 31, 1953; "Courts Must Not Be Overlooked," *Houston Informer*, February 7, 1953, sec. 1, 7; Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn," *Houston Informer*, October 3, 1953, sec. 1, 2.

Yet, the sacred status of "the individual" in the American mythos compelled not only a vision for a color-rejecting future, but also made possible critiques of "the individual," divorced of social and historical context. This resulted in incongruous editorializing and reporting in newspapers like the *Informer*, where, for example, on one page readers encountered structural critiques of crime that linked criminality to poverty, unequal educational opportunities, and racially segmented labor markets, and on the next, castigated the "individual" Negro for ze's reprehensible choices. Political theorist and feminist scholar Iris Marion Young explained this tension, noting, "According to liberal individualism, categorizing people in groups by race, gender, religion, and sexuality, and acting as though these ascriptions say something significant about the person... is invidious and oppressive." In its insistence that people be viewed as "variable and unique" liberalism "in fact obscures oppression." When Wesley imagined a dissipation of the "Negro" group once legal recognition of race was erased, he rendered impossible any "concept [of] oppression as a systematic, structured, institutional process." If "disadvantages" manifested in an individualist society, they could only result from the individual's skills, talents, behaviors, actions, and choices. Iris Marion Young, *Intersecting Voices* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 17.

Unsurprisingly, then, blaming individual Houston's black residents, whether for crime or for "choosing" not to pay the poll tax, was a trend in the *Informer*. "Though armed with physical freedom, a good education, and rights guaranteed us by the Constitution," wrote columnist Olivia A. Adams, black Americans had not achieved their "American dream" because they had not taken "individual initiative." For Wesley and his editors, this individualism was an all-encompassing ideology but it was also a market mechanism. In true capitalist American fashion, Wesley's *Informer* claimed that once the legal distinctions of race were gone, all that would be left was the economic, then social, assimilation of blacks into "American life." Through individual advancement in technical training and engineering, the market's unquenchable demand for their highly skilled and specialized labor would cause centuries of race prejudice and discrimination to fade away. "The basic question involved," the editor's claimed, "is really a moral one." The ethical problem of race prejudice was outside of the state's ability to legislate; however, the "American economic machine" could and would reorient the sick prejudicial mind toward a healthy view of each American as an individual. Legal historian Reva Siegel argues that this thinking actually rationalizes social stratification because it suggests that the "market institutionalizes racial justice" for

individuals and lends credence to “society’s efforts to delegitimize status-race claims.” Reva B. Siegel, “Discrimination in the Eyes of the Law: How ‘Color Blindness’ Discourse Disrupts and Rationalizes Social Stratification,” *California Law Review* 88, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 90–93, doi:10.2307/3481275. Examples of the *Informer*’s individualist critiques of black people’s behaviors, see: “Negro Crime,” *Houston Informer*, January 17, 1953, sec. 2, 2; “Have You Paid Your Poll Tax?,” Wesley, Carter, “Ram’s Horn: Where’s Your Poll Tax,” *Houston Informer*, January 28, 1956, sec. 1, 2. For other quotes, see Gregory P. Adams, “Our Readers Write,” *Houston Informer*, October 17, 1953, sec. 1, 12; “The Student’s Role in Racial Progress,” *Houston Informer*, September 4, 1954, sec. 1, 12; “Opportunity Knocks,” *Houston Informer*, August 15, 1953, sec. 1, 12; “Leadership From San Antonio,” 14; “Is Negro Education Failing?,” *Houston Informer*, April 18, 1953, sec. 2, 2.

¹⁴² Editorialists at the *Philadelphia Tribune*, for example, wrote that it was common knowledge that “crime involving Negroes” reflected their debased status in American society, specifically housing, education, and unemployment, and yet suggested that at least some of the responsibility for such crimes “rest[ed] on Negro shoulders.” See “Editor’s Scissors: Poverty as Cause of Negro Crime,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, January 19, 1928, sec. 2, 4; Eustace Gay, “Facts and Fancies: Negro Leaders ‘Crazy’ If They Assume ALL The Responsibility For Negro Crime,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, August 10, 1957, 4; “Defaming A Race,” *Philadelphia Tribune*, August 1, 1959, 4.

¹⁴³ “The U.S. Negro, 1953,” *Time*, May 11, 1953; “Negro Life in U.S. Feature in Time,” *Houston Informer*, May 9, 1953, sec. 1, 1.

¹⁴⁴ See chapters 6 and 7 in Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*.

CHAPTER 3: GOD, SEX, AND DYNAMITE: TENSIONS IN WHITE HOUSTONIANS' VALUES AND BELIEFS

Carl Dewey “Red” Davis interrupted the early morning tranquility in the neighborhood of Riverside Terrace on April 17, 1953, when he ignited four sticks of dynamite on the front porch of Jack and Dorothy Caesar’s home.

Since the Caesars had moved into the neighborhood in 1952, white residents had been fighting to return the neighborhood to a white-only residential enclave. But Riverside Terrace had only been “white-only” in the sense that only people defined as “white” could own or rent property in the subdivision due to racially restrictive covenants developers had placed in property deeds. Since its development, however, the community had benefited from the movement of black domestic workers and servants across Blodgett Street, the street that marked its northern border with the predominantly black section of Third Ward. Some white residents even had black workers live in servants’ quarters on their families’ lots. This cross-racial co-dependence was one indication that Houston’s Jim Crow was not a project of complete racial separation, but one of structured intimacies.¹ The mere presence of black Houstonians did not challenge that structure. Rather, when black Houstonians challenged the rules of interracial proximity and engagement—rules that generally benefited white people to the detriment of black people—white Houstonians exhibited a variety of behaviors that demonstrated their conflicted and changing beliefs, values, and attitudes regarding race and space in the Jim Crow South. Some respected the merit of black people’s civil rights claims, others responded by finding new ways to distance themselves from black people, and still others responded with violence.²

Yet, contests over racialized space in Houston rarely erupted in widespread mob violence.³ Rather, white Houstonians systematically practiced what literature scholar Rob Nixon describes as “slow violence.” Defined by “delayed destruction,” slow violence is “attritional” and often “not viewed as violence at all.”⁴ Racially discriminatory eminent domain practices, environmental racism, and infrastructural neglect were just some of the ways white Houstonians harmed black people and the spaces they lived in. Rarely, however, did black residents worry that their homes or churches might be bombed.⁵ Nevertheless, practices of slow violence illustrated how white Houstonians’ attitudes toward black people were quite typical of white supremacy, despite Houstonians’ contentions that they had better race relations than other cities, both southern and northern.⁶

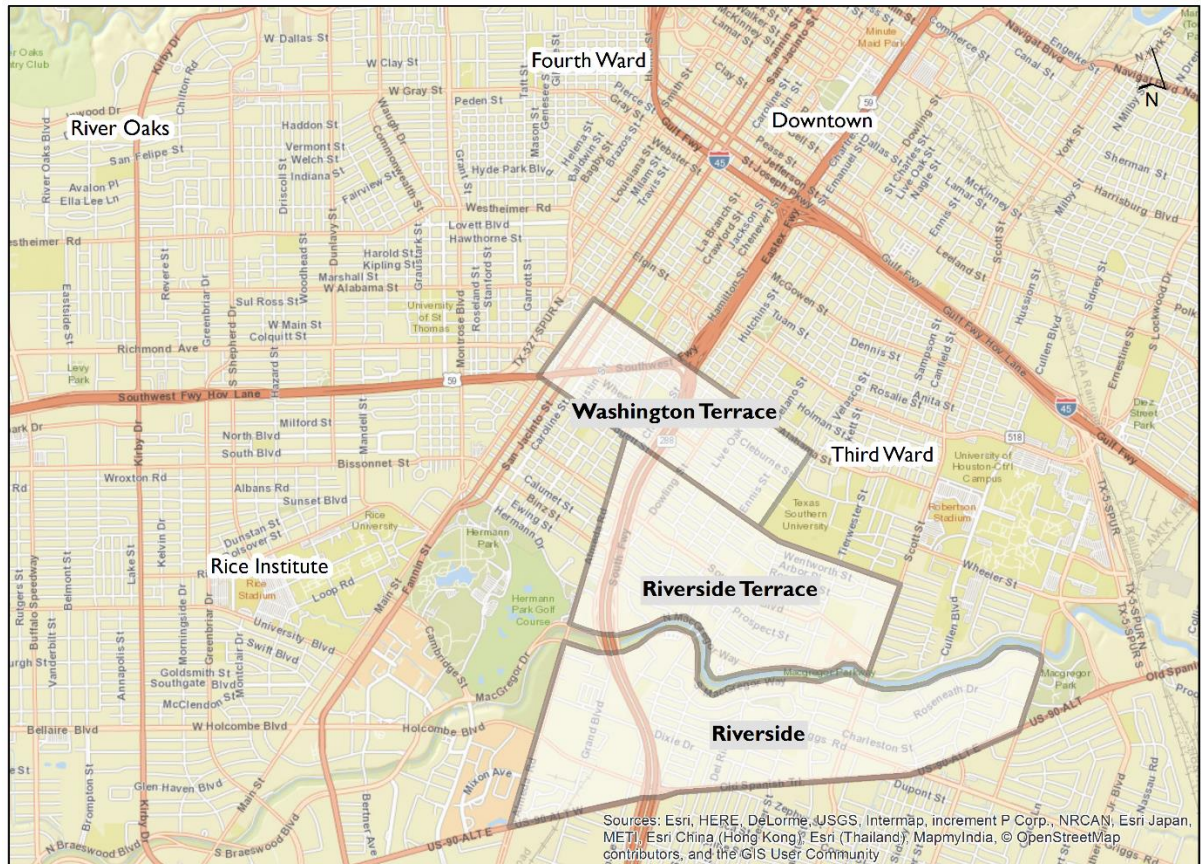
As “heavenly” as folks like Carter Wesley hoped Houston was, anti-black attitudes had shaped the city’s social geography and exposed many black people to premature death. Indeed, the bombing of the Caesars’ home highlights the symbiotic relationship in white Houston between anti-black prejudices and liberal individualist values. Many scholars have named this apparent oxymoron “colorblind racism.”⁷ They have argued that it emerged in strength in the 1960s and that it remains a pivotal component of racial formation in the United States today.⁸ However, the varied ways white Houstonians wrote about and responded to black people’s challenges to the spatial maintenance of the city’s racial hierarchy illustrates that this ideological struggle was already mature during the early Cold War period. Moreover, the Houston case illuminates what the concept of colorblind racism has heretofore failed to capture.⁹ Rather than being singularly “colorblind,” mainstream white Houstonians’ identity and racial politics were in flux through the middle of the twentieth century.¹⁰

White Houstonians responded variably to the arrival of the Caesars to Riverside Terrace. Some yielded to the property rights of their new black neighbors, afraid of what they perceived to be “Negro encroachment,” but wary of infringing on the property rights of another citizen. These people were in the minority, though. Most Riverside Terrace residents gave lip-service to the idea of individual property rights, but simultaneously demanded that the Caesars give up their new home as a show of respect to the general will of the white collective. Some, like Carl Davis, acted out in physical violence. Others tried to use obsolete and new legal avenues for maintaining racial segregation. Still others fled and found new homes elsewhere in the city and its expanding suburbs. In each case, white Houstonians found their value in liberal individualism at odds with their beliefs about the ways interracial relationships should be structured in the political economy of the city. Their attitudes, ranging from interest in the possibility of desegregation, to distress at the meaning of integration for their property values, and even to rage, performed in acts of terror both large and small, reflected the varied ways they reconciled those tensions. These varied values, beliefs, attitudes, and actions cannot be understood simply as colorblindness, nor as inevitable precursors to the rise of colorblindness.¹¹ Rather, as black Houstonians contested the maintenance of racialized space in the city, white Houstonians found their values at odds with their beliefs, and developed multiple competing ideologies to reconcile those tensions.

Some were color-rejecting; they opposed the social significance of skin color. Some wholly embraced that individualist ideal, while others accepted it except on the issue of exogamy. Miscegenation aside, they generally valued the American promise of equal opportunity to individuals. As a result, many believed that school desegregation was a moral imperative. Those who saw themselves as sober-minded moderates tried to evade the issue of historical racism. They hedged, saying they believed in equal educational opportunity but

insisted that each individual black person would have to prove ze's merit. Other white Houstonians evinced color-valuing attitudes. They found ways to reconcile white supremacist, Negrophobic beliefs with liberal individualism, relying on biology and theology to rationalize the dissonance. They still believed that black people were created as white people's social inferiors—that, when judged on the basis of individual merit, black people would always trail, as a group, behind white people. These beliefs were often rooted in a Christian cosmology, wherein Providence had preordained the Great Chain of Being, placing white people above people of color in the divine hierarchy. Whatever their position, white Houstonians never failed to at least pay lip-service to liberal individualism. Therefore, as disparate as color-valuing, color-evading, and color-rejecting approaches to the question of racial segregation were, Americans of all three sociopolitical dispositions shared a common language rooted in liberal philosophy. At this point of convergence discourses concerning crime and race were most effective at chipping away at the progressive possibilities of color-rejecting visions for the future. Liberal individualism held such ideological power over white Houstonians that even those who embraced a structural understanding of racial inequality reverted to individualist explanations for crime. Thus, "Negro criminals" could be blamed for "Negro crime," the entire racial group could be stigmatized as morally deficient, and still white Americans could argue that such an assessment reflected individual merit and was therefore consonant with liberalism.

In 1924, sales brochures for a new subdivision called Riverside Terrace invited Houstonians to imagine building homes on land that had recently been dairy farms outside the city limits. The subdivision sat on the southeastern border of Third Ward and stretched down to Brays Bayou.¹² The greater MacGregor community, which included



Map 12 Boundaries of the MacGregor-area subdivisions on a current street map of Houston.

the Washington Terrace, Riverside Terrace, and Riverside subdivisions, promised many “advantages” to new residents, including access to some of the district’s best schools. To protect property values, Riverside had numerous deed restrictions, such as the establishment of a lower threshold on the price of new construction and complete proscriptions against the establishment of property for commercial use. One such restriction was that “the property shall never be sold to any person other than of the Caucasian race.”¹³ Thorough restrictions, proximity to good schools and Hermann Park, and easy travel to downtown were all touted as opportunities. The restrictions were “only protective, not prohibitive,” and guaranteed homebuyers long-lasting value.¹⁴

When suburban development began to take off in the region in the 1920s, Houston was a much smaller city than it would be in three decades, but it had been growing rapidly since the beginning of the century due to migration and annexation. In 1900 the town was only nine square miles, and it was home to a little less than 45,000 residents. By 1920 its population had more than tripled and its land area more than quadrupled. In 1940, Houston was the nation's second fastest growing metropolis, showing a 47 percent increase in population, reflecting a 32 percent rise in the central city and a 114 percent rise in its suburbs over the previous decade. Whereas in 1900 the city did not even rank among the top seventy-five largest cities in the United States, by 1930 it had the twenty-second largest population in the country, and by 1960 it had grown to be the nation's seventh largest city.¹⁵ The Houston Ship Channel helped transform the city into a population magnet. Its promise of prosperity, "due to its close proximity to basic minerals, innovations in transportation, increased trade, augmented economic revenue, and industrial development," compelled investors and entrepreneurs to recruit black, white, and brown laborers from across Texas and the South in earnest since the channel's completion in 1914. These recruitment efforts fortuitously coincided with the beginning of the Great War and the unprecedented migration of black Americans to the North and to growing cities throughout the nation, including Houston.¹⁶

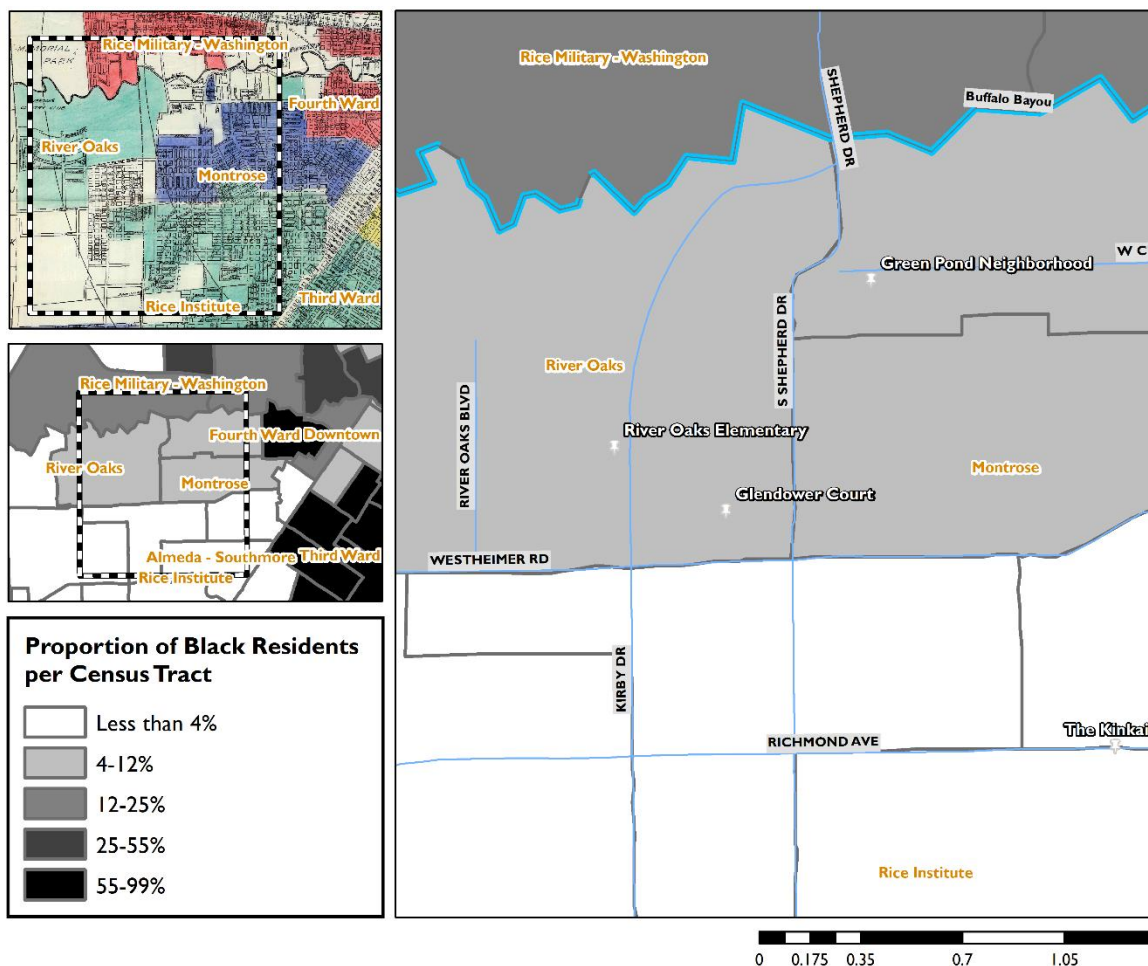
These migrants would find a city with well-defined racialized spaces. Houston's residential landscape had long been demarcated by racial hierarchies. In April 1839 free black people were barred "from becoming residents" of Houston by the city council. This ordinance intended to curb the presence of a free black population, which white Houstonians argued was "a population... much worse than useless" and "addicted to vice and commission of petty crimes." And where black labor was not easily exploitable, black

people were expendable. As early as the middle of the nineteenth century, Houston developed a system of segregation that favored white workers and white labor needs, and trafficked stereotypes about so-called black criminality. Granted, free black people may have been more likely to commit “crimes,” but perhaps only because there were certain kinds of crimes that only they could commit. Under the law, for example, they could expect to be lashed for using “insulting or abusive or threatening language” toward “any white person,” and were restricted from owning firearms, as well as from gambling, slave-owning, or preaching to enslaved people in private meetings. Because enslaved people provided more easily exploited labor than did a free class of black people, free black folk were dispensable, viewed as unable to “perform any productive labor.” Though free black people lived in Houston through the antebellum period, the city’s ordinance against their residence indicated that white Houstonians preferred white-only ownership of local space.¹⁷

As black migrants settled in Houston during and after Reconstruction, white Houstonians with economic means worked to configure the city’s social geography in ways that were beneficial to them. William Hogg, Mike Hogg, and Hugh Potter, three Houston businessmen, began developing the River Oaks neighborhood as a suburb of Houston in 1924. Originally named Tall Timbers, the community, which could thrive in part because of the rise of the private automobile, inspired the development of other subdivisions farther away from the core of the city where streetcars did not extend. Additionally, River Oaks benefited from express bus service—a first in Houston—that could carry residents to work and downtown shopping as well as cart domestic laborers from the core of the city to the west side estates. In the case of neighborhoods like River Oaks, developers were explicit about their intentions to maintain both distance *and* intimacy with an inexpensive black laboring class.¹⁸

As a counterbalance to the cycle of sprawl and decay witnessed in other American cities, Will Hogg, who was chair of the City Planning Commission of Houston in 1929, sought to manage the growth and maintain the quality of River Oaks by developing thorough deed restrictions for the properties in the neighborhood. These restrictions would attract wealthy buyers interested in making secure real estate investments ahead of an uncertain future. In addition to restricting where a house could be placed on a plot of land and where garbage cans could be located, the developers also ensured “desirability” by limiting the types of people who could move in. Though the minimum cost of \$9,500 for a house and lot limited class heterogeneity in the neighborhood, deeds in River Oaks also came with racial restrictions to keep out black people. An unwritten “gentlemen’s agreement” was tacitly obeyed and prohibited selling property to other ethnic “undesirables” such as Jewish people.¹⁹ To maintain the desirability of the neighborhood, and “to produce, for the Houston citizen, of discriminating taste, a complete residential community in the most advantageous locality,” the River Oaks Corporation refused to knowingly sell land to non-white or Jewish homebuyers.²⁰

Racial restrictions, however, were not a matter of denying black people *any* access to River Oaks, but was rather a way to create a “structured intimacy” between the wealthy white inhabitants of this new neighborhood and the black, working-class inhabitants of the well-established Green Pond and Fourth Ward. Will Hogg and the City Planning Commission, aware that municipalities lacked constitutional authority to practice racial zoning, proposed in 1929 that white subdivisions include racial exclusions in their deeds. They noted that while “negroes are a necessary and useful element in the population and



suitable areas with proper living and recreation facilities should be set aside for them,” they still represented a “problem,” and their residences should remain separate from, though in close enough proximity to white homeowners who would employ them.²¹

The children of River Oaks profited highly from the exclusivity of their neighborhood as well as the inexpensive black labor that, in part, made that exclusivity possible. One wealthy family’s history illustrates this dependence on exploited black labor. Carrington Weems was born in a home at 3335 Inwood Drive in 1928. His great great grandfather was Mason Locke Weems, better known as Parson Weems, an “itinerant bookseller” and reportedly the first ordained Episcopalian priest in the United States. The elder Weems’s wealth had come from thirty enslaved people he inherited. While family lore

maintained that he “freed them immediately” upon receiving them, Weems actually maintained ownership of the enslaved people and gifted and passed them down to his children. One of those children, Frances Ewell Weems, named after her mother, gave birth to Benjamin Francis Weems, whose educational and economic privilege allowed him to find a career as a civil engineer, leaving the family’s Virginia plantation for work in Illinois in 1855. Benjamin Francis arrived in Texas in 1859. Shortly thereafter, the Confederate States of America seceded and Benjamin Francis joined Terry’s Texas Rangers, a volunteer regiment. After serving in the Civil War, Benjamin Francis returned to the tiny town of Houston where he built a house near Main Street, using his considerable slave-based wealth to have Tiffany & Company come from New York to decorate the home. In 1900, he entered into banking. His wealth allowed him to send his children to the best schools—his oldest son, Fontain Carrington Weems, attended Princeton University and Wharton Ewell Weems—Carrington’s father—attended the University of Virginia and then the University of Texas Law School. The two Weems sons had prestigious careers. At J. P. Morgan in New York, Fontain Carrington became a pivotal part of the team “to settle all economic reparations in Europe” after the First World War. For his Weems’ work, J. P. Morgan gifted Fontain Carrington a coal mine in West Virginia, further adding to his wealth. The younger Wharton Ewell, named after Major General John A. Wharton of Terry’s Texas Rangers, had been a captain in the segregated air force in World War I, and upon returning to Texas established what would become the largest law firm outside New York. By the time Carrington Weems was born, then, his predecessors had transformed their ancestors’ slave holdings, education afforded by segregated institutions of higher learning, and a nationwide racially discriminatory job market into remarkable careers and noteworthy wealth. That wealth gave the family entry into exclusive spaces like River Oaks.²²

The young Carrington Weems benefited immensely from this family history through the opportunities that came with his childhood neighborhood. He recalled of River Oaks: though it was smaller than it is today, it was still “impressive.” He and the children of the neighborhood played in broad streets and used undeveloped land to play baseball and football. He attended River Oaks Elementary School before transferring to the private Kinkaid School, which was located nearby on Richmond Avenue. For ninth grade, his parents enrolled him at the private military school Schreiner Institute (now Schreiner University) in Kerrville, Texas, before having him complete his high school career at The Taft School, a private boarding school in Connecticut. His elite education prepared him to attend Rice Institute and the University of Houston before he completed his bachelor’s degree in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Colorado in 1952. His well-connected family gave him access to Houston’s business leaders such as Oveta Culp Hobby, Herman and George Brown, Gus Wortham, and Jesse Jones, among others. From the 1920s through the 1950s, Carrington recalled, “These guys ran Houston.” With his lineage and such connections, he very quickly established a career as a real estate developer and oil investor. He and his wife live in River Oaks today, having built a grander house there than the one he had been born in.²³

The Weems family history was one example of the way white Houstonians benefited from a dizzying history of the exploitation of black labor and the ways the management of racial space could allow white people to hoard the city’s best environmental, institutional, and social resources for themselves. Weems’s neighbors were among the wealthiest, most influential people in the city. His segregated schools allowed him an outstanding educational pedigree. Black people, forced into a split labor market by employment discrimination and racially exclusive labor organizations, often did the underpaid and unacknowledged work

that made white capitalist prosperity possible: they shoveled for white brick masons, carried for white millwrights, cleaned for white industrialists, and breathed the toxic paint fumes for white car manufacturers. In River Oaks, they worked as domestics that sustained a luxurious quality of life for the families there. Black labor and the presence of black people were integral to the creation and maintenance of their “white” space. The racial restrictions that helped define River Oaks as a sure investment, then, structured that relationship with very strict terms, such that the vast majority of its capacity for wealth-building could only be relayed to white people.²⁴

Developers created exclusive, white-only subdivisions all around Houston during the economic boom of the 1920s.²⁵ Situated on the northwest edge of Rice Institute and near the wealthy Shadyside neighborhood, Southampton was developed on one hundred sixty acres by E. H. Fleming & Company as “a community of beautiful homes, harmonious in every detail...” with the established and affluent neighborhoods of Edgemont and West Edgemont. They promised a “desirable environment” and a neighborhood defined by “permanen[t]... exclusiveness.” Investment in Southampton, they argued, was smart for a number of reasons. First, Houston was on the verge of rapid and continuous development and provided schools at relatively low tax rates. Its nascent medical industry showed signs of future growth, and its climate and proximity to farms ensured access to the best produce at bargain prices year-round. Southampton, in particular, offered additional pleasures because of its juxtaposition to Rice Institute. The school’s “unusually handsome” buildings and its perennial construction “enhanced” the value of buying a home in Southampton. Close enough yet “distinctly removed from the commerce life and atmosphere of downtown,” Southampton would prove a profitable investment for homebuyers, and a space in which to raise their children in a “beautiful community.” Residents there learned to ensure

the “preservation of their homes” and neighborhood through conscious efforts to “enforce... the tough restrictions established at the start” of the community.²⁶

These white-only developments appeared all over the southern and western parts of the city. Samuel Fain Carter and the Fain Carter Home Building Company developed Glendower Court south of River Oaks and west of Shepherd Drive as a small subdivision with 141 lots in 1925.²⁷ In 1924, potential residents were invited to tour “Home Beautiful,” an example of the kinds of homes the Fain Carter Home Building developers invited for construction on available lots. Home Beautiful was an “achievement in modern English architecture,” and “proclaimed one of the most attractive moderate priced homes ever built in the city.” It included six rooms, an attached garage, and nostalgic English design. Carter’s Second National Bank would provide financing to qualified buyers. And like many of the neighborhoods that would eventually come to make up the Upper Kirby neighborhood, Glendower Court could boast to be a retreat just outside the city’s western limits, away from the crowding and bustling of downtown, but close enough to remain conveniently situated. “Surrounded by other high-class neighborhoods and River Oaks Country Club,” the subdivision promised “unusual beauty and refinement,” as well as exclusivity and permanence. Modern conveniences of telephone service, sewage systems, running water, and electricity were guaranteed, and streetcar service would take residents from Shepherd Drive to downtown. Also like its neighboring subdivisions, Glendower Court came with “restrictions” to “protect” each buyer’s investment. If neighbors needed any further hints as to the racial demography of the new subdivision, they need only look at its proximity to all-white schools.²⁸

Both there and in Southampton, developers promised homes worthy of such protection and argued: “Real estate is the basis of all wealth...” The reality on the other

side of this claim, however, was diminishing opportunity for black people to own property in Houston. These could be a result of explicit or implicit racial restrictions in real estate transactions that limited where black people could shop for and buy homes. It could also result from reduced opportunities for black homeowners to transmit wealth across generations, for anti-black prejudices depreciated the value of black-owned homes in the marketplace without regard to the quality of those homes or their neighborhoods. In places like Southampton and the other communities that made up Boulevard Oaks, racial restrictions remained printed in legal documents even into 1960 and in River Oaks's deeds until 1985, where documents maintained that "[n]one of said lots shall ever be sold... rented or acquired by any person other than that of the White or Caucasian race." And into that decade, most of Houston's census tracts remained highly racially segregated—where white or black residents made up more than eighty percent of a tract's population.²⁹

Families who moved into Riverside Terrace, then, understood that they would have access to some of the most beautiful streets in the city with all the modern amenities they might desire, including gas and water service, concrete sidewalks, good drainage, and ready access to some of the city's best recreational, educational, and business establishments. One former resident noted, "The people moving in were the up-and-coming people: the merchant, the industrialist, the professional, and oil people..." They created a "very nice neighborhood" where "families knew each other, lived next door, wandered in and out of each other's homes." One white woman remembered, apparently despite the restrictions against non-white residents, that Riverside "was such a wonderful, heterogeneous mass of humanity, and it couldn't have been a more wonderful place to really bring up your children and enjoy yourself and to feel like you made a place for yourself."³⁰

That heterogeneity was white ethnic diversity. Many remembered only rarely seeing or interacting with black Houstonians who were not their own domestic laborers. Or perhaps on an odd Sunday, while children might have spotted and watched a black congregation perform a baptismal ceremony in Brays Bayou for its exciting “singing and wailing.” The relative absence of black people in white residents’ memories is odd. Riverside Terrace shared its northern border with the predominantly black Third Ward. Texas Southern University (TSU) was established only a few blocks north of Saint Mary’s Catholic Church, which still sits at Ennis Street and Rosedale Street, a cultural center for many white Riverside residents. Everything north of Truxillo was a “totally black area.” Riverside Terrace’s residents, then, likely understated how much they interacted with black Houstonians. The invisibility of black residents in their recollections likely reflects the paradoxical invisible ubiquity of black live-in and commuting workers. White residents were not only likely to see black people on a daily basis; they were also liable to recognize which black people “belonged” in Riverside Terrace and which ones were unfamiliar.³¹

In terms of interracial strife, despite living in such “close proximity to a solid black community,” one Riverside resident remembered, “there were never any problems in those days.” Indeed, the relationship between Third Ward and the wealthy neighborhoods of MacGregor, just like the relationship between Fourth Ward and the wealthy River Oaks, could be characterized as a lop-sided symbiosis. One resident explained:

There was a black settlement not too far from Riverside, just like there’s a black settlement not too far from River Oaks. They were dotted around the city. The black settlements being near white residential areas was not a bad thing because in so many cases the blacks worked as domestics for the whites and it was convenient for the blacks and it was convenient for the whites. So I mean it was natural.³²

As long as black Houstonians did not violate the rules that defined their “place” relative to white people’s needs, Houston could indeed boast that its race relations appeared

“heavenly.” However, following the *Shelley* decision and the Caesars’ arrival to Riverside Terrace, this “natural” economic and spatial relationship was broken. Terror followed.

In 1952, Jack Caesar, who ran Caesar Brothers, a company that traded cattle that worked out of the Port City Stockyards, asked his white male secretary to purchase a home in Riverside Terrace for him. The Caesars were not the first black family to move into MacGregor; the president of the Negro Chamber of Commerce, Rodney Hoggatt, had moved his family onto Alabama Street in Washington Terrace prior, and several black families lived “unmolested in garage apartments” in Riverside Terrace’s alleyways “for as many as ten years.”³³ Despite having the capital, and despite the fact that racial restrictions in deed covenants were no longer enforceable in courts, Caesar faced considerable obstacles in buying a home outside the city’s black neighborhoods, but remained committed to moving his family into superior housing than what was available to most black Houstonians. Caesar made it clear that he did not buy the home to gain proximity to whites. He noted, “You couldn’t find nice homes nowhere but in that neighborhood.”³⁴ His wife, Dorothy Caesar, confirmed this sentiment, saying, “We had no interest in being neighbors to white people, we were only interested in finding a house we wanted.... This is the house we wanted.”³⁵ His secretary purchased a home at 2202 Wichita Street in Riverside Terrace through a real estate agent, after which, for a fee, he transferred the papers to Caesar.³⁶

The Caesars moved into their new seven-room home on a spring night in 1952. One white neighbor remembered how odd it was to suddenly find black neighbors on Wichita who seemed to emerge only once the night shadows disappeared:

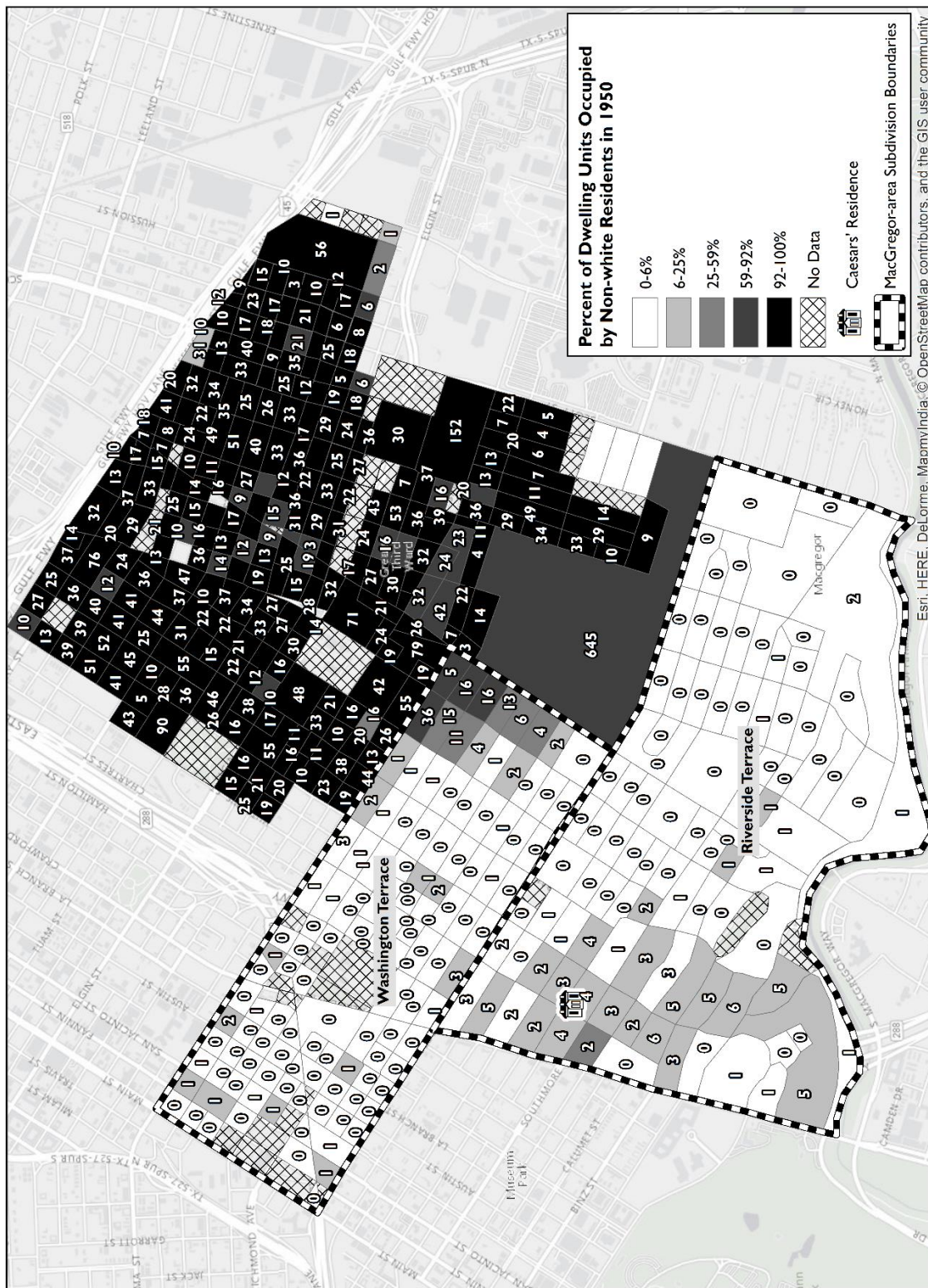
Well, nobody normally moves into moves into a new house or their new house in the middle of the night unless there are very extenuating circumstances, so they must be doing it for a reason—the reason in this case being that they were black and they were moving into what was still an all-white neighborhood. It did provide a

lot of panic and it immediately started people worrying about the value of their homes going down, et cetera et cetera, and would it be safe to continue living there.... I don't know I was just stunned. It came up so fast, and you know—in the panic and the excitement of the moment the reaction is violence. Violence. They shouldn't do that. They should move in in the daytime like everybody else does, you know.³⁷

Another woman who lived directly across the street from the Caesars remembered how quickly rumors spread: Riverside Terrace residents assumed the Caesars were “very wealthy,” that they “owned some nightclubs on Dowling Street,” or that they were funded by the NAACP to force integration. The only things most Riverside residents could know for sure were that the Caesars were quiet and rarely made themselves visible, departing from and arriving to the home through a rear driveway and spending most of their time out of public view. Despite any evidence that the Caesars were a threat to community stability, “people were really miffed because they felt that the neighborhood would not be the same.”³⁸

The MacGregor area remained mostly quiet during the initial months following the Caesar family's occupation of their new home. Caesar recalled, “I guess I was in there about three months or longer, and they thought—cause everybody in the neighborhood had some of the richest homes being taken care of by Negro chauffeurs, maids, and things, the people was gone for months—so they thought that's what we were doing.” The terror began, he believed, once the neighbors realized he and his wife were permanent owners.³⁹

The Caesars had good reason to consider they might become victims of more than petty harassment, but they appeared confident that Houstonians, white and black, would not tolerate mob violence. In the same year the Caesars moved to Riverside Terrace, a group of “hoodlums, or bigots, or just plain fools” threw stones into a black family's home, “and made threatening telephone calls to the owners.” Houstonians responded swiftly:



municipal authorities and law enforcement roundly condemned the acts of hatred and “more than five hundred persons, white and Negro, rushed to the aid of the victim, offering to stand around-the-clock watch over the property.” The *Informer* praised Houston, believing the reaction was undoubtedly an exception in the “Southern pattern.” Changes in the city’s population, as well as the decreasing social acceptability of explicit forms of racism among the white middle class, compelled “average white readers” of Houston’s dailies to “have more and more tendency to see their fellow Negro citizens and neighbors in much the same way they see themselves and resent unfairness practiced against them in the same way.” Fair treatment on the basis of individual merit, the editorialists proclaimed, was “the American way—the better way.” Houstonians appreciated their city’s version of racial “tolerance” and bemoaned violent actions that threatened to destabilize what they viewed as harmony. Yet, they did not have to believe in integration or universal human equality in order to respond aversely to white supremacist actions that threatened to mar the city’s reputation as a peaceful business magnet.⁴⁰

One month later, the *Informer* was again reporting on white terror against black homeowners. Carter Wesley wrote that the Caesar family was “being systematically harassed by the white citizens” of Riverside Terrace. The pettier acts included crank calls for ambulances, police officers, firemen, taxicabs, and food delivery. More frightening were the “milling groups of men and women around the property,” threats by phone call, and “offers” to “buy the Caesars out” of their home. These incidents got little or no attention in the city’s non-black press outlets, and the citizens of Houston failed to organize themselves to defend the Caesars. Instead, Wesley complained, the police allowed the harassment to continue and did “nothing to protect these people in their home.”⁴¹ Like most Americans in the middle of the twentieth century, Wesley probably believed homeowners were justified

in using deadly force to protect their property.⁴² However, he also understood that if the Caesars did “kill some of these people on their land,” the act would precipitate police brutality and outrage on the part of white Houstonians, as officials “would be running all around like chickens with their heads cut off, blaming every Negro in the world for ‘causing trouble.’” He warned Houstonians to proactively condemn the agitators before the city began to resemble Dallas, a city disgraced in the early 1950s by bombings at black residences.⁴³

Wesley also took aim at “the average white citizen,” who viewed the movement of black citizens into “white neighborhoods” as “encroachment.”⁴⁴ He informed them that black folk were not invading white neighborhoods, nor were they forcing themselves into white communities, but rather white residents, “because of improved economic conditions,” were leaving their old homes for even better ones. Moreover, he pointed out, white owners knew they could sell their homes to black citizens above the value of the home, and so were motivated by profit to “induc[e] and invit[e] Negroes to buy” from them. Wesley argued that “contrary to the assumption that Negroes were pushing into white neighborhoods, it was the whites who were pulling Negroes into the white neighborhoods.” But white Houstonians did not face harassment for these actions; residents “wouldn’t dare encroach upon the white man’s right to move where he pleases, and sell his property to whom he pleases.” Wesley called on city officials and “those of the men who from behind the scenes really run this town” to protect the rights and peace of black homeowners.⁴⁵

With no faith that the Houston Police Department, city leaders, or community members would come to their aid, the Caesars entered into negotiations with the Greater Riverside Terrace Homeowners Association (GRTHOA), a group of white residents led by neighbor Sidney Smiley that offered to buy the house from the Caesars. The homeowners

association was created after the Caesars moved in to “keep Negroes out of Riverside Terrace.”⁴⁶ GRTHOA managed to collect a little over \$13,000 for the purchase of the home; the Caesars were asking for \$30,000.⁴⁷ The Caesars’ lawyer, Jack Ginsburg, who was attempting to negotiate with the white group, reported threats against his life and against his home. Nevertheless, he remained committed to the Caesar’s cause, saying, “I am a citizen of the United States and have lived in Houston 40 years.” He said that the “organized hoodlums” attacking the Caesars were “worse than Hitlerism or Communism.” Ginsburg attempted to gain the support of several law enforcement agencies, including United States District Attorney Brian S. Odom, but Odom “white-washed the whole thing” and “failed in every respect” to “uphold the Constitution.”⁴⁸

The Caesars were further demoralized when it appeared Rodney Hoggatt, president of Houston’s Negro Chamber of Commerce, was attempting to get the family to reduce their asking price in favor of the white group. Mrs. Caesar explained that, in addition to the \$26,000 (or \$235,000 in 2016) they had paid for the property—about \$3,000 more (or, an additional \$27,000 in 2016) than the average value of homes on the block—the family had also invested money into the interior of the house and had ordered custom furniture made specifically for the home’s architecture. These were among the expenses they would have to shoulder if they reduced their price.⁴⁹ The family eventually agreed to sell the home for \$28,250, but GRTHOA failed to raise the money to buy it from them.⁵⁰

The Caesars’ troubles did not seem to discourage other black Houstonians with the means from hunting for quality homes in formerly white-only neighborhoods. Mattie Marcher Hilliard, a nightclub owner, moved into 2412 Wichita Street and declared she had “no intentions of moving,” despite the threats she and the Caesars received.⁵¹ After moving in, Hilliard found the sidewalk in front of her house “lined” with “morbid, angry, anxious and

even sympathetic stares from crowds of white people,” some of whom prevented her furniture from being delivered. Smiley, of the homeowners association, believed that buying out both families was impossible, and thus stopped negotiations. He said, “Nature will take its course,” in regards to the future of Riverside Terrace, which in the context of his other remarks, the *Informer* interpreted as a promise of violence. Smiley, for his part, understood that inciting mob violence was not socially acceptable in Houston. Indeed, he condemned the violence in other cities and said that the *Shelley* decision was “a good law,” but held that black citizens “should not buy in neighborhoods where they are not wanted.” Though he valued the individual rights of the Caesars to own the property, he still believed that they should relent to the desires of a white majority.⁵²

White Houstonians like Smiley half-heartedly embraced the Constitutional principle of equal protection and did not imagine themselves as racists. Smiley understood that black folks in Houston needed better housing, but argued that no black person should move into a white neighborhood without first getting the approval of their potential neighbors. For Smiley the issue was not “segregation or racial,” but that “white people ‘just don’t want Negro neighbors.’” He also believed that the relationship between neighbors was an intimate one, and believed black folks should delay neighborhood integration, suggesting they wait until “the time comes when they can say, ‘I can sit down beside you on the bus,’ before they try to live door to door with white [people].” The *Informer* reporter, apparently befuddled by this statement, asked for clarification. Smiley reasoned that “white people do not want to live next door to Negroes [as] an issue of ‘biological phenomena.’” While white residents later explained that their greatest fear was whether their new black neighbors would have the wealth to maintain their homes and stay in the neighborhood, the *Informer*

believed that Smiley's comments revealed a deeper concern: white fear of interracial sex and marriage.⁵³

Aside from an incident on New Year's Eve when the Caesars' roof was littered with fireworks, the family lived without physical attacks on their property until April 1953. According to fifty-one-year-old Carl Dewey "Red" Davis, George Howell, fifty-six-year-old insurance company owner and vice president of the GRTHOA, had been hiring him for various jobs for about three weeks. Howell, an ex-convict who had been in federal prison for committing fraud, called Davis, also an ex-convict with a five-year suspended sentence for attempted murder, into his office one afternoon and instructed him, "I want you to blast that nigger house across the street" for \$500. Three weeks prior to the attack on the Caesars' home, Davis went to Rosenberg to buy dynamite. He turned over the material to Howell who prepared the four sticks for detonation. On the week of the twelfth of April, Howell announced that he was ready to go through with the plan. On April 16th Davis left his room at the Standard Hotel, located downtown, caught a bus toward Riverside, and then slept in the back seat of a car until about four o'clock on Friday morning. He explained, "I took the dynamite out of the car and walked across the street (Hutchins Street) from the Howells' house to the niggers' house. I stopped on the steps of the niggers' house and lit the fuse. I set the dynamite near the pillar and walked off."⁵⁴ Christia V. Adair, executive secretary of the Houston NAACP, received a call in the darkness of the early morning. The voice on the other side gave her the frantic news: "Mrs. Adair, they have burned down Jack Caesar's home."⁵⁵

Incidences of high-profile interracial violence were rare in Houston, even when it came to residential segregation. Adair remarked, "[W]here Dallas and other southern cities were having fires and bombings and murders and killing, we had one incident." Upon

learning of the attack on the Caesar residence, Adair called Mayor Roy Hofheinz's house and asked his wife to inform him of what she thought was the total destruction of the Caesars' home and shared with him Caesar's address in Riverside Terrace. Hofheinz visited Wichita Street and told the chief of police that he wanted the case solved immediately.⁵⁶

The dynamite exploded on the Caesars' front porch at 4:17 AM and resulted in about \$1,000 worth of damage, blowing out "chunks of concrete from the pillar," bursting through a French door, ripping apart window panes, and dislodging parts of the roof. Sleeping in

two bedrooms at the rear of the home, the Caesars and their guests Ruth Phillips and Edith Johnson were unharmed. Startled from his sleep, Jack Caesar "snatched up a .38 caliber rifle" and inspected his house. Even as Dorothy Caesar called the police, two patrolmen who had been two miles away were already on their way, having heard the explosion from their location at Tuam Street and Fannin Street in what is now Midtown. Patrolmen J. W. Biggs and A. J. Crow arrived to find a completely dark neighborhood and mostly vacant



streets. Young men from the University of Houston fraternity house next door to the Caesars watched as Wichita Street became a crime scene.⁵⁷

The *Informer* called the bombing “the seeds of a reign of terror” and “senseless hate,” lambasting the perpetrators as “essentially psychopathic.” Whereas the community had seemingly determined that it needed to be shielded from Negro encroachment, the *Informer* argued that their greatest fears should be reserved for such lawless people as the bombers. The editorialists at the newspaper wrote, “Society needs to be protected from the machinations of such human Satans so that it can outgrow the emotional roadblock standing in the way of the development of a just and Christian social order.” Reserving no animus for the “warped minds” of white supremacists, the *Informer* maintained that “strict enforcement of law is the only answer” for all racial hate crimes.⁵⁸

Donald Caesar, Jack and Dorothy’s son, who always made a point to drive past his family’s house when he was leaving work and heading back to Texas Southern University where he lived and attended classes, learned about the attack when he arrived on Wichita Street and saw the commotion. He and the family seemed to have faith in law enforcement despite that the Houston Police Department had done nothing in the past when the family reported threats. While the protection of a black family was not necessarily motivating, “Heavenly Houston’s” image was at stake. “We knew that something had to happen for us to—for actually the climate in Houston to remain the same as it always had been,” Donald Caesar said. “Houston, had always, fortunately enough, relent[ed] to blacks when they were repressed—and blacks would ask for something and put a lot of pressure—they would respond.”⁵⁹

Night Chief Hobson “Buddy” McGill interviewed the Caesar family, who shared with him details of suspicious activity they had noticed around the neighborhood. Assistant Police

Chief George Seber called the FBI for assistance and instructed one of his detectives, John F. “Jack” Heard, to take charge of the case. Heard, who would eventually become police chief and sheriff, as well as a mayoral candidate whose campaign would not shy away from Negrophobic rhetoric, recalled his part in the investigation:

...George Seber, who really assigned me personally to it, just said, “Heard, get on this and clean it up quick.” Well the damage to the house was what I would have to call of a minimum nature. It was not damage that was gonna shake the entire house to pieces or blow up, say, fifty percent of the house. I think the purpose behind this, quite frankly, was just to scare the hell out of the Caesars, to intimidate them and run them out of the neighborhood. The primary suspects in this particular case was a man by the name of Howell, who was a local resident, lived right around the corner, actually, an insurance man who resented blacks moving into the neighborhood—I mean, everybody knew this. And the second was a man by the name of Davis, Red Davis, who was kind of a street character. He had served time in the penitentiary. He had been arrested and been held a number of times. He also worked for the Howell’s as a handyman. The Caesars were extremely cooperative through this whole thing. Mrs. Caesar, for example, had noticed the so-called handyman Red Davis... as raking leaves in one spot too long. He had been to their house... two or three times.⁶⁰

Other residents of Riverside were unhelpful. Despite reports that folks at the police department, located four miles away in downtown on the 400 block of Caroline Street, had heard the explosion, and that “police dispatchers were flooded with calls from a three-mile radius,” neighbors just two blocks away from the Caesars consistently denied hearing any explosion at all. A *Chronicle* reporter confirmed that even he had heard the explosion at his residence, some eight blocks away.⁶¹

With the neighborhood seemingly calm, even if blatantly unhelpful, Jack Caesar went to work, attending an auction sale for his cattle business. By nine o’clock in the morning, “the house was surrounded with whites—many whites,” according to Donald. They mulled, “made threats,” and only after they grew weary, “disbursed.” When he returned home and learned that his white residents remained less than amiable, Jack Caesar made efforts to protect his family. Other black families had found themselves forced to produce the same

kinds of defensive posturing, including Ossian Sweet, a black doctor in Detroit whose home was attacked by his new white neighbors. Sweet and his friends, who had holed up in the house with guns, ended up facing murder charges for fighting back against a mob that had terrorized them and stoned his house. In the process, he lost his health, his livelihood, and his family. Things played out differently in Houston. Although Caesar had several black cowboys around the perimeter of the house “with rifles and shotguns,” Caesar and his neighbors did not use guns to settle their disagreement.⁶²

Lee Haywood Simpson, local minister and president of the Houston NAACP, announced that the bombing was “the work of the devil,” but hoped Houstonians would “keep a warm heart and a cool head” as the investigation went underway. Still anxious, the Caesars continued to host friends at their home who could help protect them against the white terror in their neighborhood, should that moderate Houstonian temperament dissipate. One black woman, who had been a young girl at the time, recalled the tension in the house, even as she remained somewhat oblivious to the threat she faced while her father visited with the Caesars:

It was like a big party. I was a kid—real young—and there was a lot of food and a lot of people and there were a lot of guns. There were blankets to the windows and we were told as children not to go to the front of the house in the living room because that’s where the bomb had been thrown. I remember the Caesars had a little dog, and I was playing with the dog, and the dog ran into the living room and I ran in back behind it. My father was very angry and one of the few times when my father spanked me was then because I had disobeyed him—primarily because he was afraid.⁶³

That day she may have learned some of what it meant to be black in Houston and in America—to be at risk of white terror for trying to realize the American dream. The adults were certainly aware that they would have to maintain, as a group, a strong line of defense against white supremacist violence in order to secure their individual rights.

Mayor Hofheinz's vigorous response, Adair believed, helped maintain the city's relative calm. He told Chief of Police L. D. Morrison Sr. that he "didn't want the sun to go down without the culprits apprehended," and Adair testified that "before sundown, three men were in jail." Lack of neighborhood cooperation notwithstanding, detectives searched the Howell residence, where Mrs. George Howell also denied hearing any explosion, and found evidence of explosive materials, and also found Davis's car title, which established the connection between the two men. They arrested Davis later that evening at his room at the Standard Hotel. He admitted his role, but Howell denied any involvement. "This whole situation is ridiculous," he claimed.⁶⁴ Howell refused to take a lie detector test and posted bail shortly after his arrest. When the press questioned Howell about his connection to the man from whom Davis purchased the dynamite, he responded, "It has to be a coincidence." Howell maintained, "I'm being framed on this. I've never heard of dynamite."⁶⁵ Facing off against Davis, Howell asked, "Red, did you tell these men that I told you to buy the dynamite?" Davis shrunk into himself, responding, "Well, you're one of the main ones," suggesting a larger conspiracy than anyone in Riverside cared to admit.⁶⁶

The bombing of the Caesar residence prompted many Houstonians to articulate their visions for the future of race and racialization in Houston and America. Under Carter Wesley's leadership, the *Houston Informer* consistently publicized and editorialized about the bombing of the Caesars' home and the subsequent criminal trial. The editorialists at the newspaper praised Houston's law enforcement and Mayor Hofheinz for quickly solving the act of terror, believing that after the prosecution of Red Davis and George Howell, "a major chapter in Houston residential history will probably be closed." Houston's criminal justice process would be a testament "to the sanctification of the rule of law which makes our civilization possible." *Informer* editorialists also noted their pride in Houston; it had once

again proven that it was not of “the South” like similarly situated cities.⁶⁷ Additionally, Wesley himself often took aim at the broader issue of residential segregation and admonished Houstonians to obey the law and respect the rights of white and black citizens to sell and buy real estate as individual capitalists. Houston’s efforts to protect a black family against white terror, however belated, encouraged the vision of a raceless future wherein individualism would one day supplant the old tribalism of race.⁶⁸

For their part, white Houstonians did not submit easily to the revolution the Caesar’s move threatened to precipitate. Forming a new organization, the “Citizens Committee of Riverside Terrace and Other Areas,” they called together the area’s white residents to discuss how they might prevent “further encroachment and depreciation of property value.” Of course from Wesley’s perspective, there was no “encroachment,” but rather financial transactions between home sellers and home buyers. And while these black home buyers paid higher prices for their new homes than white buyers would have to—up to “two to three times the value of the property” according to Wesley—the value of homes in the neighborhood continued to depreciate. This was not a purely economic phenomenon, Wesley surmised, but rather a social and psychological one. “The only depreciation,” he argued, “is in the mind of the guy who thinks that he is superior, and imagines that his property depreciates because a Negro moves next door.” Wesley dismissed such racism as “poppycock,” as white Houstonians’ failed to apprehend that, by paying such exorbitant prices for homes in their neighborhoods, black homebuyers could raise the market value of the communities they moved into. But loathing and dread on the part of white residents remained a crucial barrier to seeing potential benefits to ending residential segregation.⁶⁹

The bombing compelled many white Houstonians to express their beliefs concerning residential segregation, and their beliefs were often in tension with their values. M. Gabriel

Nahas, Davis's defense attorney, claimed that he "like[d] Negroes." However, during the trial he "made an appeal to prejudice" to the all-white, all-male jury, in a last-ditch effort to rationalize the attack on the Caesars, arguing that if a black family decided to be his neighbors he "would be forced to move out."⁷⁰ This dread of black neighbors was prevalent and resonant. One woman, who, as a little girl, lived across the street from the Caesars, remembered that the bombing frightened her family so much that they moved away in response: "My family's reaction after the bombing was fear. My parents were very upset. And I know my mother was very frightened. And it was shortly after that that we moved." However, Jack Caesar told the press that even prior to the bombing that selfsame family had been aiming to sell their home to a black family and real estate agents had been showing the home to potential black buyers daily.⁷¹ The bombing had not motivated white flight; intransigent Negrophobia had. White Houstonians valued individualism and its relationship to property rights, but they also believed that society had to be spatially managed to maintain beneficial distances and intimacies between racial groups. When the Caesars threatened to undo that safe spatial equilibrium, the affective responses—fear, disgust, and rage—compelled a variety of actions. Davis and Howell, and perhaps other conspirators, reacted with violence. Most others, however, attempted to negotiate a buyout while many fled. Black Americans, in occupying the least-valued racial category in the United States, found themselves members of a caste that, in and of itself, engendered "anxiety among" white Americans, so much so that regardless of class status, black Americans would remain unwelcome in white neighborhoods.⁷² This anxiety was often expressed in economic terms, but it was rooted in concerns about sexuality and racialized beliefs about criminality.⁷³ When it came to the management of race, white women's wombs were the most sacred of spaces.

George McCelvey, staff member of the *Rice Thresher*, the student newspaper at Rice Institute in Houston (now Rice University), visited the home of Heman Sweatt in 1948 to discuss the man's educational predicament. At the time, Sweatt's attorneys were representing him in a lawsuit against the University of Texas at Austin for its refusal to admit him into the law school. He explained that despite his losses in the lower courts, he believed his case had done mostly good, making all Texans more aware of the "discrimination and discrepancies within our educational system." Sweatt believed the tide had changed for the South. Similar challenges to state universities had met with success for black applicants, including Donald Murray's September 1935 admission to Maryland State University's School of Law and Silas Hunt's January 1948 admission to the School of Law at the University of Arkansas. It was only a matter of time before *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) would deal a national blow to segregation in graduate and professional programs. On December 4, 1948, McCelvey penned an article detailing this conversation with Sweatt.⁷⁴

Coy W. Mills, principal of Jefferson Davis High School in Houston and Rice alumnus, was "very much surprised" to read the feature on "Negro Sweatt (Mr. Sweatt to you)." In a letter replete with anti-black disgust to *Thresher* editor Brady Tyson, Mills asked three questions. First, he wanted to know the "purpose" of the story. Second, he asked about the "policy of the *Thresher*" in regards to the question of integrating Rice. And lastly, he demanded to know, "What will be your attitude if Sweatt or another Negro is admitted to Rice and tries to date the Co-eds, perhaps your best girl friend or sister?"⁷⁵

Assistant editor, Robert McIlhenny, replied that the feature on Sweatt was a "part of a series of articles on educational opportunities in the Houston area," and that the effect of

segregation on black Texans' educational opportunities was "integral" to understanding education throughout the South. McIlhenny stressed that no student admitted to or attending Rice should be granted "special privileges" on any basis outside of individual merit. On the issue of dating, he succinctly explained that the "personal and private lives" of his fellow students should remain free of intrusion or restriction by the Institute. Lastly, McIlhenny inquired why Mills penned his initial letter, suggesting that Mills wrote his "questions" with only one set of acceptable answers in mind.⁷⁶

Mills's response revealed as much. "I could not force myself to believe," he said, "that the Editor of the *Thresher* was in favor of admitting Negroes to Rice Institute." And still unsatisfied with McIlhenny's responses, he presented five more questions to Tyson, three of which suggested the editor and his staff should be removed or resign from their positions because they appeared, to him, unqualified for their jobs. The other two questions stemmed from his regarding McIlhinney's answer about dating across the color line. This time, he demanded a "direct" response with either a "yes" or a "no": "Would you be opposed to a Negro student of Rice dating your best girl friend [sic], sister or other co-eds?" He also wondered if the editor would be amenable to having a black student assigned as his roommate.⁷⁷

Tyson replied in the *Thresher*, writing, "I am not sure why the question was asked, but here goes." The editor tersely noted that he would not oppose having a black roommate living with him. He said that he would "definitely oppose, or at least feel very hurt" if a black student "got a date" with a family member or a personal friend, but that he nevertheless would "never attempt to dictate" who or how they should date. As for his co-eds at Rice, he remarked, "It is none of my business." Tyson openly wrestled with the tensions between his values and his beliefs. The former respected the rights of individuals to

make their own choices without compulsion. Yet, while he seemed to believe in the inherent equality of all people, he maintained an aversion to interracial dating. For folks like Mills, the inferiority of black men was apparent, and they did not deserve to attend his alma mater nor should they have the opportunities to date white women. Tyson, however, struggled with reconciling his belief in social equality with his understanding that endogamy was just how things should be.⁷⁸

Black Houstonians who watched this debate play out in the school newspaper found hope in those tensions. William V. Houston, president of Rice, assured Tyson and his readers that their debates concerning desegregating the Institute were “entirely academic,” because the school “was founded and chartered specifically for white students.” Therefore, he concluded, “The question of admission of negroes... is not one for administrative consideration...”⁷⁹ The student editors at Texas Southern University’s (TSU) *Herald* sardonically suggested that Houston’s terse response to the issue was an indication that Rice’s students should “clam up,” lest they raise the ire of the Institute’s executive. However, TSU students did not care much for President Houston’s deferment of the question of integration to the school’s charter, writing that the school faced “the age-old conflict between what is legally right and what is morally right.” They felt that integration was inevitable because Rice’s students were willing to face the moral dilemma before them, and trusted that the existing dissonance between ideals and laws could not withstand the test of time.⁸⁰ Indeed, for students like Tyson, a future where color did not determine student eligibility for admission to a school like Rice was inescapable, and if not accomplished during his time as a student, it would be realized when he and his classmates assumed leadership roles following graduation.⁸¹

Indeed, at least some white college students throughout the South looked forward to a future unburdened by Jim Crow for themselves and their black counterparts. The editorial team at Rice Institute's *Thresher* reprinted an editorial from *The Toreador*, the student newspaper at Texas Technical College (Texas Tech) in Lubbock, which stated, quite plainly, that segregation was a problem that was going to be solved voluntarily or by force—that the only remaining question was when a resolution would be reached. They pointed out that nearly seventy percent of students at the University of Missouri (UM) voted that they would like to see Missouri's segregation laws repealed, and the student council there passed a resolution saying they wanted “qualified negro students” to have the opportunity to enroll at UM and other state schools. They acknowledged that the existing alternative for black students, Lincoln University, was inadequate and unequal.⁸²

The editorial staff at Texas Tech maintained that they did not necessarily agree with a wholesale commitment to immediate integration, but they did imagine themselves and their generation of students more disposed to solving the problem of the color line. Idealistically, yes, they believed that integration was important for fulfilling national and individualistic principles of “equal rights for all of us regardless of race,” and they shamed the nation for having “failed to deliver the goods” thus far. Those liberal hopes of a young generation notwithstanding, many white Americans refused to reconcile individualism with their beliefs about “Negro crime” and “Negro bucks” and the threat these presented to what they understood as white people's safety and the white race's sanctity. Indeed, while some like Tyson turned to Christianity to argue for the full equality of people—or at least men—others saw a mandate within their Protestantism to prevent any so-called race-mixing.⁸³

A few months prior to the *Thresher* letters, in mid-August 1948, at a convention in the Sam Houston Coliseum, located downtown, the States' Rights Democrats launched their national campaign against federal encroachment on local and regional issues. Their goal was to "wrest the 127 electoral votes in 11 states of the traditionally solid south from the National Democratic ticket." There, Governor Strom Thurmond of South Carolina and Fielding L. Wright, governor of Mississippi, were formally nominated as candidates for president and vice president, respectively, for the 1948 U.S. presidential election.⁸⁴ Though Thurmond, in this crowd a "moderate," tried to keep the conversation focused on states' rights even he could be aroused to seek the fever pitch and boisterous approval of a white supremacist audience. (Of course, states' rights in the South maintained Jim Crow through surreptitious traditions and explicit laws, including the maintenance of the poll tax, which poor black southerners struggled to pay.) He shouted to the crowd, "There's not enough troops in the Army to force the southern people to break down segregation and admit the Negro race into our theaters, into our swimming pools, into our schools and into our homes."⁸⁵

On August 29, 1948, Brady Tyson wrote a letter to Thurmond. Like many Houstonians, Tyson's perception of his city was that it was one, not only of prosperity, but also of progress. He felt that the convention had been "marred by the injection of the racial question," and pointed to the ads that warned white Southerners of "Negroes in your churches, in your schools, in your colleges, in your swimming pools, [and] in your beauty shops" if Thurmond and Wright were to lose the election. Most troublesome for Democrats, Tyson contended, was that eventually the "Christian" sensibility of Southerners would make the racial antipathy of the states' rights campaign so noxious that even such ardent supports of states' rights, such as himself, would turn their backs on the Dixiecrats.

He believed that segregation was “morally wrong,” and the South would eventually, “thru education... return to the principles of Christian brotherhood.”⁸⁶ Democracy and Christianity were intimately tied in the minds of many Houstonians, including Heman Sweatt, who noted that integration was not an issue of “abstract agitation,” but was rather a moral crisis that the nation had foisted upon itself. Integration was necessary and “purely in line with our democratic ideals,” he maintained. “I think it violates no Christian principles and I firmly believe that the full respect for the individual is, and what he is able to offer the community and the nation will eventually come.”⁸⁷

Rather than colorblindness, Brady Tyson typified a color-rejecting vision for the nation’s future. For him, belief in a racial hierarchy was inconsistent with his Christian convictions. This tension reflected a long liberal philosophical tradition within Christian Protestantism that placed the individual and the freedom of will at the center of the faith’s soteriological project.⁸⁸ Thus, racial progressives often expressed a desire to reject the notion that skin color had any social value. Tyson’s vision, however, was not blind to history. He and his editorial staff recognized long-lasting disadvantages on the basis of race, and believed that white Americans had to consciously confront their racist beliefs in order to realize a more equal society.

Many, however, saw the state of racial inequality as evidence of black racial inferiority rather than white oppression. Their belief in a “just world” helped them reconcile Tyson’s moral dilemma within themselves. Through a “Native Protestant ideology,” white Americans made “propositions about human nature and society that” allowed them to “interpret complex human problems and take action” in ways that benefited them. These propositions rested on the veneration of individualism, the valorization of meritocracy, the virtuousness of property ownership, and the vigilant practice of a Protestant work ethic

» FELLOW TEXANS, Do You Want Communism? «

Southern Solidarity Is Our Only Hope to Preserve States Rights and Our Way of Life!

THURMOND-WRIGHT

Are fighting for the preservation of **PERSONAL LIBERTY** and for **FREE ENTERPRISE** in the **UNITED STATES** —the very foundations of our form of government. **VOTE** and **WORK** for their election because the mis-named Civil Rights Program of **TRUMAN-DEWEY-WALLACE** proposes to:

- 1.---BAN ALL RACIAL SEGREGATION THROUGHOUT THE U. S. A.
- 2.---CREATE A PERMANENT FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMISSION

SEE SENATE BILL S-984, REPORTED BY THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND PUBLIC WELFARE FEBRUARY 26, 1948. THIS TRI-PARTISAN BILL IS AIMED DIRECTLY AT THE HEART OF THE SOUTH. IT IS A CARBON COPY OF JOSEPH STALIN'S "ALL RACES" BILL ENACTED IN RUSSIA IN 1920.

What Truman's and Dewey's Civil Rights Program Will Do To You:

In his opening campaign speech on September 20, 1948, DEWEY twice declared that all racial "Discrimination in the United States must be eliminated. As governor of New York, DEWEY authorized the first FEPC bill to be adopted by a State. The proposed bill pending before Congress is almost exactly identical with the law in force in New York today.

THE TRUMAN-DEWEY-WALLACE PROGRAM TO ABOLISH ALL RACIAL SEGREGATION WILL----

1. Admit all races to our public schools without discrimination. If your children go to school, as required by law, they could be forced into association with negro boys and girls.
2. Could put negro principles over white teachers and negro teachers over white children.
3. Admit negroes, without discrimination into all colleges.
4. Admit negroes in all hotels, restaurants, theatres, churches, swimming pools, barber shops, beauty parlors, and all places where the public congregates for business or pleasure.
5. Admit negroes without discrimination, on all trains, buses and public conveyances.

The Truman-Dewey-Wallace FEPC Anti-Discrimination In Employment Plan, Senate Bill S-984, Does This To:

1. LABOR UNIONS:

"It is an unlawful employment practice for any labor organization to discriminate against any individual or to limit, segregate, or classify its membership in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive such individual of employment opportunities, or would limit his employment opportunities, or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee or as an applicant for employment, or would affect adversely his wages, hours, or employment conditions, because of such individual's race, religion, color, national origin or ancestry." This bill provides for fine and imprisonment for its violation. This bill was reported out of Committee February 26, 1948.

TEXANS, WE MUST UNITE IN THE FIGHT LEST WE FOREVER LOSE FREEDOMS PURCHASED WITH THE BLOOD OF OUR FATHERS. THE TRUMAN-DEWEY-WALLACE PROGRAM LEAD ONLY TO COMMUNISM.

On November 2nd **VOTE RIGHT**
VOTE FOR GOV. FIELDING L. WRIGHT
 GOV. J. STROM THURMOND
VOTE FOR STATES RIGHTS
 VICE PRESIDENT

(This Ad Sponsored and Paid for by States Rights Democrats of Colorado County)

THE CREED OF THE STATES RIGHTS PARTY

We rededicate ourselves to the principles and traditions of the Democratic Party and repudiate the blasphemy of those who would charge us with hating. It is our loyalty to these principles and our devotion to these traditions which provide us to action. It is our cherished desire to reactivate our Party with the principles which others have sacrificed for cheap political expediency. We stand for individual liberty and the sovereignty of the States as essential to the independence and preservation of the Republic.

2. EMPLOYEES:

It is unlawful for any employer "To offer resistance to the employment of any individual because of race, color, religious creed, national origin, or ancestry" (Page 718--Hearings before Senate Committee on Senate Bill 984). Penalty: Fine and Imprisonment by Federal Court. Thus, if a white girl should object to working for a negro boss she can be fined and imprisoned.

3. EMPLOYERS:

It is an unlawful employment practice-- "To ask any questions of an applicant for employment to disclose race, color, religious creed, national origin. To ask the employer, whether applicant was naturalized or native-born, the original name if name has been changed, the birthplace of applicant or his parents, the general military experience or his whereabouts DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR FROM 1914 TO 1918, or to inquire into organizations in which applicant is a member--even to ask if applicant is a member of the Communist Party or any other subversive organization. FELLOW TEXANS: We CAN maintain our state rights. We CAN keep our state segregation laws. We CAN keep our right to work under and for whom we please and to employ whom we please. We CAN avoid a Federal Police System and bureau which would interfere with our state, county and local authorities. We CAN stop this trend toward Communism which does away with our personal liberty and this trend toward a centralized, powerful Federal Government in Washington with its hundreds of useless and annoying bureaus patterned after Russia's setup.

We can prevent this encroachment upon our states' right and the rights of its citizens to conduct their own business affairs if we do just one thing: UNITE WITH THE OTHER SOUTHERN STATES. Show the politicians of the North and East that we are united. Show these politicians that the vote of the South is worth more than the negro vote of the doubtful states of the North. We people of the South who have been ignored by both the Democratic and Republican Party can gain recognition if we stick together. We have a chance to throw the election of the President into the Congress where each state would have one vote. If one of the candidates should be elected by a landslide vote then the States Rights Party certainly would poll the second largest number of electoral votes in which case the States Rights Party would be recognized as the minority party of the United States and in the organization of the Congress and its Committee. The States Rights Party would then get the committee assignments. If the Democrats should win the Senate by a few votes and the Republicans should elect the President, then what a wonderful position for leading our States Rights Senators of the South would be in. The States Rights Senators of the South would then hold the balance of power in the Senate. VOTERS is the only thing these politicians can understand--let's use our votes. Let's poll the 22 electoral votes of Texas in the same column with the other Southern States. We of the South are not going to be taken over by the Eastern element to satisfy the parochial of wicked and unscrupulous politicians. If the States Rights Senators of the South are elected, all segregation of the armed services must be abolished by the President, which means that your sons and daughters may have to eat in the same mess, sleep in the same barracks, work and play together, and be under the direction of white officers.

This is YOUR fight for YOUR way of life and Freedom--do your best--send a contribution to:

MRS. S. H. KIRKHAM, Treasurer,
 STATES RIGHTS PARTY of Colorado County,
 Columbus, Texas

Name

Address

(“self-control, self-sacrifice, and restraint”). The centrality of these values to the maintenance of freedom and democracy was expressed by one writer to the *Post* who complained that Americans had become too dependent on each other and the government in the New Deal era. F. G. Swanson, a resident of Tyler, Texas, argued that co-dependency represented a “disintegration of moral fiber in all groups” throughout the nation and firmly believed there was no “Biblical, moral or ethical” impetus to “provide other than for those in reasonably honest need.” Swanson’s anti-communist tirade foreshadowed the limits, in terms of charity and justice, of colorlessness in a discussion about correcting a tradition of racialized (dis)advantage. Prosperity, in whatever form, was evidence of good Protestantism. Black people’s socioeconomic status was, therefore, all they had earned.⁸⁹

A few days later, Thurmond replied to Tyson’s letter. He assured the young editor that “while the segregation issue is of course of vital importance in the South,” the fundamental issue was federalism—that, according to him, the national government was overreaching the bounds of its powers in interfering, not only with the segregation issue, but also “police power, control of the ballot, and regulation of all internal matters.” Thurmond acknowledged that the South was not a monolith when it came to the institution of Jim Crow, and made clear that he opposed integration because he believed it was antithetical to the “welfare of both white and colored.” And he emphasized, regardless of his personal opinions, despite the fact that as governor his opinion could shape the immediate policy and destiny of South Carolina, each state should decide what to do about segregation. A federal decision, he concluded, would be unconstitutional.⁹⁰

Despite Thurmond’s protests otherwise, however, the States’ Rights Democrats “relied on racism and the fear of desegregation to arouse white passions.”⁹¹ John Ed Pearce, a writer for Louisville, Kentucky’s *Courier-Journal*, contemptuously bemoaned Thurmond’s

obfuscation, arguing that he and his fellow Dixiecrats had “no honest concern” for states’ rights. “The issue,” he wrote, “is Nigger.”⁹² This being existed in the imaginations of white folks who were committed to controlling “everyday geographies” and maintaining their cultural “landscape,” which was not static but “a process... a cultural practice that represents and enacts popular ideas” about where black and white folk belonged.⁹³ Pearce explained this white imaginary further:

Not Negro; not the 14,000,000 citizens of our democracy who are trying to raise themselves to a higher standard of life and living through the equal rights and opportunities guaranteed them by our Constitution. Not the people who are striving against disheartening odds to take a decent, respectable place in society, despite the efforts of those who object to their differences in skin coloration.

The issue is not the Negro, the human being who exists and struggles. It is Nigger, that non-existent creature which lives only in the hate-filled minds that conceived it. The word is never spoken, yet it hangs in the air, sweaty, rancid, brutish, hulking and menacing, bespeaking the fear and ignorance of the minds that bore it. On the platform Mr. Thurmond and his fellow traveler shout of Americanism, our way of life, the right to choose one’s associates, Communism, Reds. But they mean Nigger.⁹⁴

The “Nigger” was where white folks like Thurmond located their hatred and their fears, and the site from which they reified, by way of law, custom, and violence, the “possessive investment in whiteness”—that privilege by which they could secure certain rights for themselves and, without apparent contradiction, deny those selfsame rights to people of color. Indeed and increasingly in the post-War era, whiteness, as possession, was a matter of “space as property” and “space as social imagination”—of symbolic and physical real estate—which differentiated darkness from whiteness, wilderness from civilization. Those of Thurmond’s ilk, then, could maintain their commitment to individual, private rights with little cognitive dissonance, having convinced themselves that the “Nigger” was real and fundamentally “not-quite-human,” and therefore, not an individual. The “Nigger,” as a symbol of unbridled sexuality and crime, was the black image in the white mind.⁹⁵

Tyson's opposition to Jim Crow on the basis of his own Christian sensibility raised the ire of many of his peers and readers, because even when those respondents tentatively acknowledged the democratic rights of black Americans, when it came to the issue of social equality, they saw black folks, not as individuals, but as a group. Tyson penned an editorial explaining that he was in favor of admitting black graduate students into Rice, but noted that he did not anticipate a mass migration of black students to the school because many were not Rice-caliber applicants. That is, historical wrongs had to be corrected, but black students still had to prove their individual merit. In response, Lycurgus Cleburne Christian, a local attorney and son of a Confederate soldier, wrote to Coy W. Mills, and copied to Tyson, a letter castigating the *Thresher* editor. Following a brief rant about carpetbaggers "who know absolutely nothing about the Negro" and who demanded "SOCIAL EQUALITY between Southern Whites and Negroes," Christian expressed exasperation that "a student at Rice Institute, right in our midst" could be an integrationist, and "doubt[ed] whether or not students are actually being EDUCATED at Rice." While willing to admit a constitutional guarantee to political, religious, and economic equality, social equality, as far as Christian was concerned, was off of the table. The sixty-seven-year-old lawyer argued that the Reconstruction amendments were "illegally adopted" and only remained because "intelligent, and advised, Southern Whites" allowed them "in order to preserve the peace." Nonetheless, they and "our better-class Negroes" understood that social equality was "merely a PRIVILEGE," not a constitutional guarantee. Indeed, even some white Americans were not the social equals of their white brethren, he noted, pointing out that those who tended toward criminality were not welcome in his home.⁹⁶

Christian's non-sequitur descent into a discussion that equated criminality with transracial social equality presaged the heart of his argument. He certainly knew that there

were no laws against romantic or sexual relationships between the “criminal-minded” and other white Americans and he never suggested that there should be. (Similarly, Riverside Terrace residents had apparently been unbothered that Carl Davis and George Howell both had criminal records and had no concerns about the potential effects of their presence in the neighborhood on their property values.) Instead, interracial sex monopolized the space in Christian’s letter. Social equality was a particularly “insane” demand for white supremacists because it meant, at its worst, “miscegenation,” which Christian and those like him believed “violate[d] the law of both God and Man.” Transitioning from legal practitioner to fiery preacher, Christian proclaimed:

The Divine command was “Go forth and re-produce your KIND;” it was not “Go forth and re-produce HYBRIDS.” The beasts, birds, and even the insects, recognize and obey this Divine Law, and violate it only when compelled to do so by Man, for breeding and scientific purposes. Man—and only Man—is sufficiently ignorant, and presumptuous, to even attempt to do so.”⁹⁷

Switching from preacher to biologist, Christian further explained that “hybrid” races suffered moral and physiological deficiencies, tending toward extinction, pointing to the sterile mule as an example. The writer asked: “Do these ‘nit-wit’ advocates of social equality, between Whites and Negroes, believe themselves superior to our Creator in wisdom?” If so, “blasphemy,” he claimed.⁹⁸

Other white Houstonians expressed much of the same sentiment after *Brown v. Board of Education* was decided in 1954. In 1955, during a Constitution Day banquet in Houston, speakers declared to the audience that “the concept of non-segregation counters God’s law and is the latest attempt to replace democracy with totalitarianism in America.” Their understanding was that integration denied Americans the right to choose their associations, though it was clear that the Americans they had in mind were only white Americans. Thomas P. Brady, Circuit Court judge in Mississippi and “noted states’ rights

advocate,” addressed the diners, saying, “If God had wanted one species on earth he would have created him—God saw fit to segregate the races.” Like Christian, he viewed black people as fundamentally, phylogenetically distinct creatures in the Great Chain of Being.⁹⁹

White Christians managed to both deny and acknowledge the human equality of their black neighbors without a hint of irony. Roberta A. Morrison, a white Afrikaner transplant to Pasadena, Texas, confessed, “All of us are equal in the sight of God, yes—but it seems that anyone but a child would realize that there is no other equality, socially, economically, physically, or any other way—even within the white race, or any other race for that matter.” Employing a Native Protestant ideology, Morrison claimed that “the white race” had “earned its progress and standard of living by thousands of years of hard work,” and was disgusted by the “Communist” suggestion that “blacks in Africa... straight from the bush” should be treated as the equal of white people when their standard of living was “at least a million years behind the times.” To be sure, Morrison clarified, she did not hate black people, and indeed, her family had “always employed colored domestic help” and provided for them a better standard of living, through wages, room, and board, “than most Northern wives.” Nevertheless, if black people were to be judged on individual merit, they had proven for centuries their unequal status to white people. Likewise, Dorothy Hansen, a housewife from Missouri who lived with her husband, an immigrant from Denmark, in the Magnolia Park neighborhood of Houston, noted, “We grew up loving Negroes, but we never thought about going to school with them. There’s going to be a great deal of dissention in the South.” And, R. H. Winans, a mechanical engineer who lived in the all-white town of West University Place, enclaved but not annexed by Houston and situated near Rice Institute, noted after *Brown* was decided: “There ought to be other ways of helping the colored folk than by living with them, going to church with them, and having them in our schools.” This

was not an issue of racial antipathy, not a denial of black humanity, nor a moral or religious quandary for Morrison and other white folks who saw themselves as good, reasonable people; it was just a matter of fact that “‘apartheid,’ or separation” was natural and inevitable.¹⁰⁰

But, like her ideological compatriots, Morrison eventually exposed her underlying beliefs about black people, and they had nothing to do with individual merit. “When segregation is abolished in the schools,” she wrote, “miscegnation [sic] is sure to raise its ugly head, sooner or later.” She asked, “What could possibly be so morally ‘right’ about mixing races and filling the world with halfbreeds?” Hence, her commitment to American individualism and “earned” white supremacy appeared to reach its limits. The question of interracial sex and marriage, which she raised of her own accord, re-inscribed racial groupings as real and natural, and revealed her own possessive investment in a supposed white racial purity. It also reflected how much space the “Nigger” as a sexual creature occupied in white imaginaries.¹⁰¹

This is why “liberal thinking” white folks like Brady Tyson disgraced tried and true segregationists like Lycurgus C. Christian. For Christian, people like Tyson stood on the side, not of black folks who “possess better sense,” but “a comparatively few lecherous-minded Negro ‘bucks’ consumed by a burning desire to consort, and inter-marry with White women.”¹⁰² The discursive option to describe black men as “ravenous, unscrupulous, and sexually out of control” beasts was socially-embedded in Christian.¹⁰³ Despite his presentation of himself as a rational man, he still believed, as did his forbears, that black skin was a “disease”—a discoloration that acted as nature’s stamp on the hypersexual and the savage.¹⁰⁴ Christian maintained that despite the threat of the “Negro buck,” and “despite the fact that hundreds of White Southern women were brutally raped, and in many cases

murdered, by the Negro brutes during 1947, only ONE Negro rapist was lynched in the South.” This was evidence that white Southerners had progressed, and that indeed, the racial liberals needed to convince black men to stop attacking white women, rather than continue their clamoring for anti-lynching legislation. He believed that the United States had made progress toward the equality of black folks since slavery, noting that they had already achieved “100% religious equality” and were “rapidly acquiring equal political and economic rights.” Social equality, however, was an “insane” demand and an affront to the divine order. Christian valued individualism and white supremacy and used the image of the black criminal as a way to reconcile his prejudice with that universalist ideology.¹⁰⁵

John A. Clark, a reader from Coleman, Texas, who wrote in much more moderate terms, nevertheless expressed the same anxieties as Christian. While lauding “the Negro” for “improving wonderfully... for a number of generations,” and predicting their continued progress—though he did not precisely define what he meant by that—Clark cautioned against taking extreme positions that would “pit the White Race against the Negro Race in a fight” where both would face casualties. He asked Tyson to be wary of “agitators,” a loaded term during the Second Red Scare, and certainly a loaded term in general for southern segregationists who were still seething over the “War of Northern Aggression.”¹⁰⁶

Prior to Clark’s interjection, Alfred Groner, a staff writer for the *Thresher*, had written a piece arguing “that segregation is unjust, outmoded, and un-American,” and he praised his fellow *Thresher* contributors for their progressive stance on “this race question.” Here, the moderate Clark began to sound much more like Christian. Tearing down Groner’s idealistic conception of what it meant to be American, Clark leaned on history, saying, “Now let’s be honest about this question—does History back you up in that statement[?]” He believed the contrary: “[S]egregation has always been what the American

people wanted, and what they still want—that is, the red-blooded type of American.”

Though he admitted that Jim Crow “may be unjust,” it was only so “to the extent that it deprives the Negro of educational opportunities he should have.” But such limits were a necessary evil, especially, it seemed, in the case of undergraduate education, where “rooming with Negroes” meant, in his understanding of the expressing, sharing “the same double bed together.” “Rooming,” he was sure, would lead to “intermarriage.”

Condescendingly, he implored Groner and other “good people” to stop “mis-directing” the progress being made toward educational equality for black Americans, believing that although facilities were not equal across the board, over time the nation had proven—to him—its commitment to equal educational opportunity. America simply needed more time. Sure, all black people were not being given a fair shot, but Clark expressed relief that his daughter, a senior in high school, was “not going to room with Negroes” when she matriculated to college.¹⁰⁷

Parker J. Parker, a black man who wrote to the *Thresher*, scoffed at the likes of Clark’s “half-hearted” admission that segregation was unjust. Pointing to the elite schools of the northeast—“Yale, Harvard, Cornell, Rutgers, and Dartmouth”—Parker argued that integration was not only possible but the only model of “real democracy” in education. He challenged Tyson to take a strong stand against the anti-miscegenation camp, saying that anti-segregation necessarily “include[d] intermarriage and cohabitation,” and that if the editor was unwilling to honor this measure of social equality then both his position and the Constitution were hollow. Parker noted that there were “several thousand colored GI babies” in Europe who were loved by their mothers, and that if the South could embrace such a democratic posture, black folks who had migrated to Harlem and Chicago would return and re-infuse the southland with their human capital. Equality, he pressed, could not

be achieved by improving existing or establishing more “colored schools,” but rather by full societal integration, where black doctors and lawyers could build interracial clientele, where the captain of the Rice football team could be black, where “if a white girl associates with colored boys in class, in the gym, on the tennis courts etc., why couldn’t she go to a dance with him.” True equality, Parker argued, would not kowtow to racialized sexual anxieties, but it was indeed sexual anxiety that figured prominently in the backlash against Tyson.¹⁰⁸

The gendered terms with which the likes of Christian and Clark discussed integrated undergraduate education betrayed perhaps their greatest fears as white men in the Jim Crow South. The questionability of their stances for educational and economic equality notwithstanding, both men ultimately saved their strongest, lengthiest commentary for the issue of interracial sex and marriage. Perhaps they believed economic and educational parity were truly possible in a segregated society; the totality of their inner beliefs remained illegible. However, their words revealed that they understood “the Negro” to be male and sexually threatening, even if, apparently, enticing enough to attract willing white women. Black women were rendered invisible across all of the dialogue by white liberals and white supremacists. And it was not that white men of their kind were opposed to educational opportunities for women; indeed, their central contention was that integrated schools would be unsafe places for women like Clark’s daughter if black men were allowed to enroll. Thus, their antipathy toward desegregation and their abrogation of black women were not manifestations of mere misogyny, but a sexism co-constructed with and co-articulated by anti-black racism. Their fear of black men, or perhaps more accurately, the intense dread they felt at the idea that white women would enter consenting, long-lasting romantic relationships with black men, was the quintessence of their pro-segregation stance. Race, gender, and sexuality conflated to render black men dangerous—and in this case not

because they were prone to rape white women—but because consenting interracial relationships could precipitate the end of white racial purity, which was bound to the wombs of white women and only white women. Sexual freedom, at least one sociologist warned the Houston public, was “menacing to our internal security,” and the morality of any sexual behavior was to be determined by its potential harm to “community,” “family,” and “yourself.”¹⁰⁹

These men did not share the same concerns, it seems, about black women integrating schools, although presumably they did not believe there was space for black women at places like Rice either. The rule of hypodescent, the “convention ‘that considers a white woman capable of giving birth to a black child but denies that a black woman can give birth to a white child,’” meant much less need for anxiety surrounding interracial sex wherein white men and black women were the partners, consenting or not.¹¹⁰ Their interracial liaisons neither threatened white racial purity or white men’s exclusive ability to transverse all spaces without social sanction. The silences surrounding black women and white men in these conversations spoke to the open secret of southern cities—that, as John Henry McCray of South Carolina explained, it was “a commonplace experience for many of our women in southern towns is to [be] propositioned openly by white men.” If rebuffed, some white men were willing to demand “forced intimacy.” Sexual violence perpetrated by white men against black women occurred with “alarming regularity” through the 1950s. White evasiveness of this open secret notwithstanding, for black Southerners, the violent sexual assaults of black women by white men rendered “the fight of the ignorant white South against school desegregation... childishly futile.”¹¹¹

Carter Wesley agreed, calling out “segregation’s double standard.” White men, in Houston and throughout the South, could escape indictments, convictions, and even charges

of rape when black women were the plaintiffs. Meanwhile, “if a Negro looks at a white woman, when the wind blows up her skirt... all of the daily papers and white leaders deplore the beastiality and depravity of the Negro race.” He demanded that white men hold each other accountable for assaults on black women, take responsibility for their own sexual impropriety, and acknowledge their own sexual desires, while he also implored white women, who he noted were “ordinarily... fair and courageous,” to join in solidarity with “the colored woman” and “demand punishment for those who wrong her.” Implying white men wholly incapable of policing themselves beyond a fault, Wesley assured white women that their freedom was bound up with those of black women. He concluded: “This the white woman of the South must recognize... she must act to protect womanhood from fiends, [and] she must also be color blind as to whether the woman violated is white or colored.” Wesley’s vision of justice resurfaced; it was one in which the skin colors of victim and assailant did not predict a judicial outcome better than the facts of the case. He summarily dismissed the sexual anxieties of white men, and demanded higher visibility to the issues that concerned black women. His plea to white women was particularly daring, as he demanded they defy social expectations and extend the sanctity of womanhood that had been bestowed upon them to black women as well.¹¹²

White anxiety surrounding black men’s and white women’s sexualities helped segregationists rationalize their group-wide prejudices against black people. Rice student Bob King wanted Tyson’s readership to know that the majority of its students would actually agree with the likes of Christian and Clark, not the newspaper editor. He wrote that while he respected Tyson, he did not appreciate that Tyson was using the newspaper to “impress” his “viewpoints” on the student body, nor did King like that Tyson was leading the *Thresher*’s wider readership to believe that integration was desired by the majority of

Rice's students. He demanded that Tyson answer Mills's questions about interracial dating forthrightly, charging that the editor had been "elusive" and disingenuous. So, King decided to offer "true insight upon Mr. Tyson's beliefs," retelling the story of how Tyson and another student had taken him downtown to meet Charles A. Shaw, executive secretary of the Watchtower Life Insurance Company, "one of the leading insurance companies in Texas," owned and founded by black Houstonians. "The purpose of this trip," King editorialized, "was to influence me." He learned that Shaw was "1/32nd negro," that he had reasonable arguments against segregation, but that he also held the, to King, untenable position that interracial dating, marriage, and child-rearing should be matters of free association. King recalled: "Mr. Tyson agreed verbally." While King "strongly desire[d] equal rights in all respects for the negro and white races," he was both "appalled and saddened" that Shaw and Tyson would even suggest the possibility of social equality. Much like Christian, where he could not legally justify his opposition to "miscegenation," King turned to religion, believing that racial separation was a sacred matter, and that any opposition to racial purity "seems very disrespectful to our maker."¹³

Thus, some white Houstonians promulgated a color-valuing stance toward integration. At a time of intense anti-Communism and the valorization of "the individual," white Houstonians who opposed integration therefore articulated their disdain for social equality by employing a number of interconnected rationales. Color-valuing, forthright white supremacists simply disavowed the equality of black folks, believing that there was something less than human about black folk as a matter of divine law. Less extreme ideas posited the full equality of all people in the eyes of Providence, but contended that that equality did not extend into the social and physical worlds. Such color-evasion posited that the races had earned, in meritocracy, whatever their group place had been located. While

color did not necessarily define the intrinsic worth of a being, color could—and did—define each individual's place in society. Some white Houstonians rationalized their belief in the moral imperative of racial segregation with their liberal individualist values by relying on economic arguments, foregrounding their concerns as property owners. However, their class-based justifications were never divorced from racial logics and were often sustained by the same sexual anxieties that inspired the rhetoric of folks like Smiley, Christian, and King.

Ultimately, these fears reflected beliefs wherein black people were inherently dangerous and criminal. In response to the Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), Governor Allan Shivers of Texas solicited letters from the public concerning how he should address the issue. Hundreds of letters poured in from all across the state from anxious white residents. Helen A. Hunt's letter explicitly stated the tension many Americans were trying to reconcile in this Cold War period: "My belief in our U.S. Constitution is unshakeable, yet I find it difficult to accept in fact that undeniable and truthful right of equality of all men." She explained that she could "never" overcome her personal prejudice against black people, despite recognizing that they should be guaranteed equal access to opportunities as citizens of the nation. She suggested a plan for gradual desegregation starting in the first grade and then moving up the grade levels each year, so white children learn to see black people as equal and the "six-year-old piccaninny" will not have "absorbed much of the Negroes' lowly standards." Even here, in the letter written by a woman with a self-reflective understanding of her own prejudice and no explicit references to biological difference or theological mandate, the specter of immorality and filth among black people lay on the surface of anti-black discrimination.¹¹⁴

But if Mrs. Hunt held her beliefs and values in tension with one another, other white Houstonians and Texans learned to reconcile them. On the progressive side, which

accounted for very few of the letters, the reconciliation was simple: one had to abandon white supremacy in order to honor their values. Mrs. Wilma Lindsey explained that she had lived in other parts of the world and had learned that segregation was provincial and tribal. It was a stain on Texas, she said, likening it to Georgia and Mississippi. But Lindsey's opinion was in the minority among white Americans of the time.¹¹⁵

Most writers to Shivers were like V. P. Lance—not explicit biological racists, but certainly opposed to social equality. Like Lance, they would start their letters with the recognition that: “A negro is a human.” But being human was not enough. They needed to be real Americans—they needed to have spilled their blood for the Republic from its inception and earned their place as citizens. Black Americans had not done that, he insisted. Instead they had been “made citizens” by “our ancestors,” Lance argued. And now they, like Frederick Douglass, had gotten an inch and taken an ell. Political equality he could stomach, but the social equality that desegregation threatened to bring was “a sign of us being railroaded.” For Lance, Black people could be human, if human meant they were of the same species as white folk. But they were not a nation worthy of the name.¹¹⁶

Many writers held the same opinions as Russel E. L. Middings, a married café owner from Dallas with two years of high school education. He turned to theology and the Bible to justify segregation. “God made a wolf, it is an animal,” he explained. “God made a sheep, it is an animal. Can you keep them in the same pen? Yes, if you want to destroy the sheep.” The case Middings made was not exactly the same kind of theological one prevalent in the nineteenth century. He claimed that black people were indeed human just as white people are human, but the former was predatory and the latter was like prey. He continued: “I have respect for the negro. I am his friend, if he will let me be, but I do not intend to bunk up with the negro.... This is not prejudice. It is obeying the law of nature—GOD...”

Middings certainly believed himself sober-minded and showed no evidence of embracing the kind of scientific racism that brought about many of the horrors in World War II. But he also was not “colorblind,” even as he departed from the kind of eugenicist white supremacy that pervaded the early decades of the twentieth century. Though he was in practice a white supremacist, in his mind he understood that the races were simply different. The wolf was no better than the sheep, and vice versa. But they were different, he maintained. And so he could claim, without a hint of irony, that he held no prejudice against black folk, insofar as it was not prejudicial to avoid a natural predator. Even here, however, we can see the implicit argument that black people were a danger to society—that they must be kept away from white people—that the solution to the problem of black danger was more segregation.¹¹⁷

Middings reached the same conclusion as Jack Connelly, then, though the logic in their two letters was quite different. Connelly typified those die-hard white supremacists of yore. He viewed black people as less-than-human, “just one step ahead of an ape.” Like Middings, his argument immediately invoked the image of black danger. “Look at the recent rape cases in Texas,” he argued. “They prove my saying that they are one step ahead of an animal in most cases.” But even Connelly tempered his tone, even as he referred to “negro blood.” “A few of them,” he learned, “you can trust.”¹¹⁸ White feelings toward black people, then, were quite complicated. They could detest the group but respect select individuals. They could believe the myth of the black male rapist, but still hire black men to chauffeur their wives. They could believe that black people were filthy, but hire black maids to clean their homes and feed their families. The economic desires of white Americans, the luxury of cheap black labor, and persistent negative stereotypes about black people gave rise to these paradoxes and gave shape to the structured intimacies that defined Jim Crow societies.

As disparate as the logics in many of these letters were, a common thread followed through them: fear of black danger. One writer made the odd claim that black people were not religious—despite that one of the firmest and long-lasting stereotypes about black people was that they were intensely religious, if not overly superstitious. The sentiment here, however, was picked up in another letter, where a mother wrote, “It’s not the color of the Negro’s skin, but the color of his soul, blacker than his skin, that is the greater menace.” The menace referred to a tendency toward vice, sexual impropriety, filthiness, and criminality. Writer John Brougher explained, invoking vital statistics, that black people had proven that they had low moral standards. “The Mexicans,” he explained, were once also ostracized by the white population. But they had proven the ability to keep their children clean and taught them a firm moral code. Black parents, he argued, including black teachers and black churches, failed to love themselves and their children. They trafficked in moral degeneracy. Were black people created this way? Were they biologically predisposed to criminality? Or were they shaped culturally toward self-destructiveness? For Brougher, these questions were moot. For him, the facts were the facts and black people had proven themselves unworthy of social equality with the white race.¹¹⁹

Similarly, a writer who did rely on religion to make his case initially eventually found it useful to reference crime data to prove his point. This anonymous writer explained that, “When anyone tries to tell us there is no difference between the white and the negro, he is trying to undo what God has done.” Invoking racial difference rather than white supremacy, the writer briefly switched gears: “Most negroes are good people.” There he seemed to acknowledge individuality among black people and a willingness to judge them as persons rather than a group. But, a few sentences later, he claimed, “[B]ut there is still some improvement for them yet... To adjust themselves as a whole.” Then, like so many others,

he summoned the discourse of black crime, “In the city of Atlanta in 1953, there were 74 homicides... 70 of the 74 was negro killed negro.”¹²⁰ Across the board, then, whether they were biological racists, cultural racists, theological racists, or any odd combination of the three, white Americans who believed that segregation was central to the maintenance of societal order found their explanation in the problem of what they then called “Negro crime.”

In the aftermath of World War II and in the cauldron of Cold War politics, Americans across the nation vocally renewed their commitment to liberal individualism. But, for many white Americans, their value of individualism was at odds with their belief in white supremacy. I tease out this tension in the 1950s to develop a more complete, though admittedly fragmented image of white racial thinking. Though black Houstonians during the time often spoke of their “raceless” vision for the future of America, their white neighbors were not quite ready for that dream. Instead, they held their beliefs and their values in tension until they learned to reconcile them. Variably and in various ways, they used religion, nature, biology, and culture to rationalize a world wherein race still functioned as a caste system but individual merit supposedly determined each person’s status in life. However they worked through this tension to create synergy, it seemed the constant thread was the image of the “Negro criminal” as evidence of the need to maintain the American caste.

Color-valuing beliefs had several components. The two most obvious were biological and theological racism, and they were often, though not necessarily, co-constitutive beliefs. Biological racism allowed white supremacists to reconcile their individualist values with racial inequality by noting the inherent differences between the so-

called races. Theology gave racial pseudo-science a divine stamp of approval. The third belief was about racial criminality. By the 1950s, the conviction that black people were more criminal than their white counterparts was only tentatively tied to biology in the minds of many white folks. While some would certainly point to “Negro criminality” as evidence of black people’s biological inferiority, often they preferred to use crime statistics as justification for segregation, rendering the state of racial science inconsequential. Ironically, this “scientific” explanation for black inferiority created a space where biological and theological racists could find common ground with racial progressives.¹²¹

Twenty-one-year-old Charles Tighe, a Rice Institute basketball player, wrote at length to Tyson about his hopes for desegregation. He believed that regardless of where the majority student body opinion stood on desegregation in 1949, compared to students a decade prior there would be strong indications of progress toward a more racially-inclusive sentiment at Rice. Indeed, by 1953, when students were first surveyed regarding integrating Rice, fifty-seven percent polled in favor of desegregation, and in 1961 undergraduates voted 2:1 and graduate students 4:1 in favor of excising the university charter of its racial restriction.¹²² Tighe noted that, for himself, the “segregation dilemma” was an unconscionable one, rooted in prejudices “inflicted” on children by their parents and teachers, dating back to racial slavery and perpetuated by contemporary systemic discriminations.¹²³

Like many in the middle of the century, Tighe maintained that laws could not change people’s personal discriminations, and thus believed progress toward an integrated society would “take place gradually and only by constant work.” He pressed white Americans to take on the task of doing that work, arguing, “From a Christian viewpoint he [the black person] is undoubtedly our equal.” And from a secular perspective, the Constitution

“theoretically” guaranteed all black Americans “the rights, privileges, and duties conferred on each ‘citizen.’” For white Americans, religious or otherwise, “the real most important change must come from within the individual” as a result of “calm, objective thought.” They would unlearn the belief that “the ~~average~~ Negro child isn’t as capable as is the ~~average~~ white child [strikethroughs in the original text].” Black folks did not suffer from biological or physiological deficiencies, but rather from a dearth of opportunity, and this, he wrote, “is not his [black people’s] fault, but ours!” His sentiments were congruent with the color-rejecting political philosophies of civil rights leaders like Christia Adair and Carter Wesley.¹²⁴

But, Tighe then went on a tangent and brought up the subject of crime. “If a Negro steals, he should be put in jail,” he argued. The same was true if a white person stole. “But the difference,” he wrote, “...is that the member of our own race is given a chance to live as an honored member in our society, while the Negro is denied this chance and in effect is judged guilty without chance of a trial.”¹²⁵ Like other Houstonians demonstrated, an understanding of systemic inequality could bring a certain level of nuance to a conversation about how to treat people who were fundamentally disadvantaged in American society, but color-rejecting philosophy was still steeped in liberal individualism and this limited the kind of creative reasoning polemicists could deploy in favor of structural fixes. Even if a lack of opportunity could explain many incidences of crime in black Houston, Tighe still believed the individual perpetrators should be incarcerated after a fair trial. Though he looked forward to an America, a Houston, and a Rice where freedom of association was not limited by color, though he had a certain grasp on the realities of the historical and structural disadvantages black Americans faced, and though he was “sure” that black citizens must be granted equal opportunity, Tighe’s principles were still fundamentally shaped by a

democratic Christian ethos where individuals were responsible for what he perceived as choices, regardless of the circumstances which informed or even forced those actions. Eschewing color, then, could also mean ignoring how crime itself was socially constructed and how black people were socially positioned to be made into criminals, especially when they contested racial boundaries. The case of a working black man named Johnnie Lee Morris, who contested white space on a city bus, would elucidate the limits of political positions rooted in individualism in black Houstonians' fight for racial justice.

Notes

¹ While many white southerners viewed Jim Crow as a way to maintain "separate togetherness," wherein they could "create a... world of masters and servants," where servants were nevertheless configured as members of their families, historians Stephen Berrey and Rebecca Sharpless argue that we should never mistakenly believe that black servants actually saw themselves as members of the family. Most did not. Pointing to the attrition of black domestic workers in WWII's industrial economy, for example, they note that black people who worked for white families unmistakably understood their place in white households as laborers. Stephen A. Berrey, *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2015), 46–48; Rebecca Sharpless, *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1865-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

² WBAP-TV (Television station: Fort Worth, Tex.), "[News Script: Two Charged in Houston Bombing]," April 19, 1953, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting UNT Libraries Special Collections, Denton, Texas, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc705383/m1/1/>.

³ The bombing at the Caesars house was the only recorded racially motivated house bombing in Houston. Black churches, often a target for violence in other cities, were also spared mob attacks. Even the infamous 1917 Camp Logan mutiny did not inspire civilian mob retaliation; the undisciplined response of the police department seemed violent enough to satisfy white Houston. Edgar A. Schuler, "The Houston Race Riot, 1917," *Journal of Negro History* 29, no. 3 (July 1, 1944): 300–338, doi:10.2307/2714820; Haynes, *A Night of Violence*.

⁴ Rob Nixon, *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 2.

⁵ Historians have demonstrated that the North-South dichotomy that pervades popular understandings and scholarly frames for histories of racial violence in America are misleading. The contributors to Matthew Lassiter and Joseph Crespino's collection, *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*, demonstrate that racial violence, terror, and segregation, and spatial management looked similarly in cities across the regions of the United States. Riots and house bombings, although not adequately covered by the press, were no less deadly or sustained in Chicago than in Birmingham. Racial violence against Chinese immigrants and residents on the West Coast were no less economically detrimental than those acts against Mexican migrants and black Americans elsewhere in the country. The development of Levittown as a white-only suburb was a mirror reflection of federally subsidized, racially restricted suburban

development in the South. Moreover, unlike Midwest urban metropolises like Detroit or northeast cities like Rochester, Houston did not experience incidences of widespread and sustained mob violence in response to civil rights gains. The specificities of a place, rather than its regional location, appeared to define the ways a city would respond to racial change. Matthew D. Lassiter and Joseph Crespino, eds., *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983). Unlike New Orleans, Miami, Baltimore, Norfolk, Louisville, San Francisco, Chicago, or Dallas, the city of Houston nor its voters never approved racial zoning ordinances. Houston, indeed, was exceptional as the only major city of the country to avoid a racial zoning law, although that did not keep it from maintaining spatial segmentation of racial groups, of course. Christopher Silver, *The Separate City: Black Communities in the Urban South, 1940-1968* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995); Benjamin Ross, *Dead End: Suburban Sprawl and the Rebirth of American Urbanism* (Oxford University Press, 2014); Connolly, *A World More Concrete*; Steptoe, *Houston Bound*.

⁶ Like Houston, Detroit made liberal use of restrictive covenants. Public housing policy in Houston and Philadelphia functioned similarly to either contain black populations or justify their removal and dispersal. Houston's Sunbelt rival, Atlanta, experienced more outright racial violence than Houston, but both cities engaged in the same practices of slow violence. Atlanta officials, however, were more successful at racially-motivated urban planning more generally. Harold Black, "Restrictive Covenants in Relation to Segregated Negro Housing in Detroit" (M.A. Thesis, Wayne State University, 1947); Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*; John F. Bauman, *Public Housing, Race, and Renewal: Urban Planning in Philadelphia, 1920-1974* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); Mark Bauerlein, *Negrophobia: A Race Riot in Atlanta, 1906* (San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002); Bayor, *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*.

⁷ "Colorblind racism" has received increasing attention from historians and sociologists over the past several decades. In their theory of racial formation, Michael Omi and Howard Winant argue that American history has to account for evolving "racial projects." Different racial projects have risen to cultural ascendancy at different moments, but each is "simultaneously an interpretation, representation, or explanation of racial dynamics and an effort to reorganize and redistribute resources along particular racial lines." Following the civil rights gains of the late 1950s, they argue that a "neoconservative" racial project emerged that shunned the overt, bellicose white supremacy of late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and instead promoted colorblindness, wherein "[n]o state policy can legitimately require, recommend, or award different status according to race." Michael Omi and Howard Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s* (New York: Routledge, 1994), 56-57.

Many sociologists have presented evidence that this racial project has been critical to the formation of white identity since the 1950s, as "the growth of the black middle class... challenges the historical meaning of whiteness." They agree with Winant that neoconservative colorblindness, whether it is a sincerely held value or not, is the racial project by which "whiteness... now covers itself with the fig leaf of a formal egalitarianism," as its "latest defense of white supremacy." Colorblind meritocracy sits at the heart of this anti-structuralist racial project, and racial inequality, whether it manifests as residential segregation or job market segmentation, are a result of "blacks' cultural deficiencies (e.g., laziness, lack [of] proper values, and disorganized family life)." Following the demise of Jim Crow, most white Americans, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva argues, were socialized to "breathe color blindness," and remain convinced by this "formidable racial ideology" because it "seems reasonable" and progressive while it allows them to remain oblivious to their racialized privileges. Historians agree that the emergence of "colorblindness" and its coalescence with white identity are crucial to understanding post-WWII America, especially as it regards questions of the rise of the new conservatism, urban decay, school segregation, the "southernization of American politics," and the stunted gains of the mid-century civil rights struggle. Amy Stuart Wells, *Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 29-30 (first quote); Howard Winant, "Behind Blue Eyes: Whiteness and Contemporary U.S. Racial Politics," in *Off White: Readings on Power, Privilege, and Resistance*, ed. Michelle Fine et al., 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 5 (second quote); Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era* (Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001), 161-62. Also see López, "A Nation of Minorities"; Lawrence Bobo, James A. Kleugel, and Ryan A. Smith, "Laissez-Faire Racism: The Crystallization of a Kinder, Gentler, Antiblack Ideology," in *Racial Attitudes in*

the 1990s: *Continuity and Change*, ed. Jack Martin and Steven A. Tuch (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997), 15–44; Steven A. Shull, *A Kinder, Gentler Racism?: The Reagan-Bush Civil Rights Legacy* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1993); George W. Shepherd and David Penna, *Racism and the Underclass: State Policy and Discrimination against Minorities* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

⁸ “The theory of racial formation suggests that society is suffuse with racial projects, large and small, to which all are subjected. This racial ‘subjection’ is ideological. Everybody learns some combination, some version, of the rules of racial classification, and of his own racial identity, often without obvious teaching or conscious inculcation. Thus we are inserted in a comprehensively racialized social structure. Race becomes ‘common sense’—a way of comprehending, explaining, and acting in the world. A vast web of racial projects mediates between the discursive or representational means in which race is identified and signified on the one hand, and the institutional and organizational forms in which it is routinized and standardized on the other.... [T]hese projects are at the heart of the racial formation process.” Omi and Winant, *Racial Formation in the United States*, 127.

⁹ See Chapter 1, note 5. Dan T. Carter’s “white backlash” argument remains critical for scholarship on post-WWII conservatism. Carter argues that neoconservatism wrapped in colorblind racism was a southern export in *The Politics of Rage*, 11, 78. Several modifications to Carter’s thesis have been made by social historians since Carter first published *Politics of Rage* in 1995. Joseph Crespino’s thesis foregrounds the role of race in the new conservatism in Mississippi, pointing to the ways leaders “initiated a subtle and strategic accommodation to the demands of civil rights activists” that nevertheless “helped preserve the priorities of white elites...” Their capitulation to civil rights gains resulted in a colorblind conservative politicking that they were able to shop around the state and the nation, focusing acutely on issues of government encroachment while keeping an eye on the prize of maintaining white privilege and white immunity from addressing racial inequality. Importantly, Crespino illustrates the ways Christianity and anticommunism infused the new conservatism and complemented colorblind rhetoric in a way that helped the conservative backlash appear non-racist and intensely American, and hence, “morally” right. Crespino, *In Search of Another Country*, 4 (first quote), 81 (second quote). Also see: Quadagno, *The Color of Welfare*; Lopez, *Dog Whistle Politics*; Bonilla-Silva and Deitrich, “The Sweet Enchantment of Color-Blind Racism in Obamerica.”

David M. P. Freund makes a more dramatic intervention to Carter’s thesis. Studying the northern post-War metropolis, Freund argues that as early as the 1940s, white Americans’ racial identities and racial politics “were undergoing a fundamental transformation.” He maintains that “race *did* matter,” and so discounts scholarship that argues against the significance of race in post-War conservatism. Instead, he contends that whiteness, as an identity construct, became defined by the ascendancy of the suburb, the birth of a new middle class, and white folks’ growing investment “in new ideas about the relationship between race and property.” Race and racism, he argues, were not “static,” but evolving and adapting all the time, and that the biological racism of the 1910s was no longer the fulcrum of white supremacy/exclusivity by the 1960s. Freund’s analysis emerges in the literature as a profoundly intersectional one, where white racial identity is also a class identity, and hence white racism cannot be understood in isolation from market-driven classism. The “colorblind” individualism that Carter suggests was a backlash to civil rights gains, then, Freund argues had already been a developed part of white identity politics before 1954. Moreover, he contends, this colorblindness cannot be understood as simply obfuscation of an old racism, but was a deeply held commitment. Any apparent racial prejudice on the part of white citizens—at least those ones who honestly believed themselves colorblind—was, from their perspective, “market-driven reason” with regard to protecting their property interests against depreciation that, for whatever reason, seemed to follow wherever black folk moved and lived. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*, 8 (quotes).

In contrast, returning to the apparent exceptionalism of the South, and focusing on the life and career of James J. Kilpatrick, historian William P. Hustwit argues that alongside a real commitment to small government and individual freedom, conservatives like Kilpatrick maintained a thoroughgoing commitment to white racial supremacy, though in muted terms. Kilpatrick, a nationally syndicated conservative columnist in the 1950s through the 1970s, had been an ardent segregationist in the 1950s and grew in notoriety by reasoning in his column that Virginia had an obligation to interpose itself between the federal government and individual citizens following the 1954 *Brown v. Board* decision. He

also argued that southern states should form a coalition, all of them enacting the doctrine of interposition to defy any court orders to desegregate local schools. While he maintained that “the Negro race, as a race,” demonstrated a fundamental anthropological inferiority to white people, he sought to appeal to moderate sensibilities by focusing on issues that were less tainted by the most blatant white supremacist rhetoric: individual rights, meritocracy, interposition, and small government. William P. Hustwit, “From Caste to Color Blindness: James J. Kilpatrick’s Segregationist Semantics,” *Journal of Southern History* 77, no. 3 (2011): 650 (quote).

By the end of the 1950s, however, realizing that interposition could not withstand the federal court’s power, Kilpatrick altered his position, and in 1961 expressed that he could acknowledge and respect the successes of individual “Negroes” who demonstrated that they were “decent, well education [sic], intelligent, and perfectly respectable men and women,” insofar as they did not demand social “intermingling” with their white counterparts. In his transition from a racism committed to black “inferiority” to a racism defined by a belief in fundamental racial “difference,” Kilpatrick was beginning to articulate his commitment to “colorblind” individualism. In private, however, he admitted that this was more a discursive change than a transformation of conviction, believing that by changing the language he could avoid charges of racism. Throughout the 1960s, Kilpatrick articulated his newfound theory of racial difference more fully. In effect, he judged black people “as a race,” and then pointed to the “individual” as responsible for self-uplift. He expected black people, “as a race,” to prove themselves worthy of equality to white people, while he remained wholly convinced that each individual black person was responsible for making that happen. He remained oblivious to the ways his expectations conflicted with each other, for he maintained racial prejudice against “the race,” but did not believe that prejudice in any way impeded the progress of black individuals, and moreover, maintained that the successes of a few individual black folks were not indicators of the possibilities for the entire racial group. *Ibid.*, 651 (all quotes).

By the 1990s, Hustwit argues that Kilpatrick and the nation’s conservatives had successfully folded in this “colorblind” approach to racial difference and racial inequality into their other commitments for small government, free market capitalism, private property, and “equal opportunity” (i.e., anti-affirmative action). Thus, Kilpatrick indicated for Hustwit that conservative colorblindness was “reactionary”—a response to social and political changes in the nation that not only ended *de jure* segregation, but also made blatant white supremacy unpalatable. *Ibid.*, 664 (first and second quotes), 669 (third quote).

Matthew Lassiter’s *Sunbelt Majority* also focuses on the South, but like Freund, Lassiter appreciates the intersections of racism and classism in ways that Hustwit does not. Lassiter agrees with Freund that colorblindness was not, for many white southerners, a hastily constructed disguise for the unpalatable biological racism of the past. Like Freund, he argues that transformations in whiteness as identity began in the 1940s. He notes that this was not a “backlash” to civil rights gains, but rather a response to “fundamental transformations” in the American demographic, political, and social landscapes. The mass migration of black and white folks from the rural South to the booming economies of Sunbelt cities and their rising suburbs issued a direct challenge to the one-party system that had monopolized southern politics since the advent of Jim Crow voting restrictions and coming of age of the white primary. Second, the rise of suburbs (possibly through the federal funding of exclusively white residential communities, Lassiter points out) coincided with civil rights gains and changing social attitudes about race. White Americans learned to see their middle class ascendancy as a result of their individual hard work and merit and their investment in property that they would call home a matter of earned privilege not to be circumscribed or trifled with by the federal government. They chose to create and live in white neighborhoods, they reasoned, because it was a sound economic investment. Color prejudice, they contended, was not a factor in their decision-making. Finally, then, this transformation of identity, which Freund had so brilliantly demonstrated had occurred in the North, had also taken place in the South prior to the civil rights gains of black Americans following 1954, and was already primed for collapse under a broad conservative umbrella that wed colorblindness, meritocracy, and individual property rights under one anti-big government umbrella. Lassiter, like the aforementioned scholars, does not concede that “racial prejudice simply disappeared from middle-class values,” and rather maintains that the emergence of a new way of thinking hinged on “the establishment of structural mechanisms” that made it possible for white Americans to create, anew, exclusive white spaces. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority*, 3 (second quote), 4 (third quote). On black disenfranchisement in the South, see Gunnar Myrdal, *An*

American Dilemma, vol. 2: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964).

In his study of Atlanta, Keven M. Kruse agrees with Lassiter and Freund that “the white backlash” was not an exclusively Southern phenomenon, nor was it without pre-civil rights movement precedent. However, he does contend that race and space were central to white conservative anger in Atlanta—that as black Atlantans successfully gained access to public spaces that had once exclusively belonged to white folks, “white southern conservatives were forced to abandon their traditional, populist, an often starkly racist demagoguery” for “color-blind” individualism that allowed them to take advantage of the color-coded structural relationships emerging between urban centers and their suburban satellites. White flight was indeed reactionary, “freedom of choice” a language that could appeal to “suburban segregationists” who viewed themselves more as isolationists intently protecting their individual rights against federal dictatorship and their property investments against “undesirable” elements. Kruse, *White Flight*, 128 (first quote), 6 (second quote), 266 (third quote), 245 (fourth quote), 248 (fifth quote), 244 (sixth quote).

Notwithstanding some disagreement about whence colorblindness emerged and how it interacted with conservative commitments to small government, historians, sociologists, and other scholars have developed a long list of the detrimental effects of colorblind individualism on non-white, and particularly black Americans. These include, but are not limited to, racialized mass incarceration, persistent educational segregation and racialized achievement gaps, residential segregation patterns wherein white buyers get greater access to newer and better housing stock, disproportionate exposure to environmental hazards, racially disparate voting rights restrictions, and mass unemployment and underemployment. Even when black Americans share income parity with their white counterparts, the historical and social science literatures still reveal that black Americans and their children suffer with respect to each of these social, political, economic, and environmental factors. These researchers emphasize the *structural* nature of this inequality, highlighting the ways it has and continues to limit the life chances of black Americans. They also urge scholars and lay readers to understand that this structural inequality is not only immune to being resolved by colorblind individualism, but is sustained by it.

¹⁰ This chapter addresses the “mainstream,” which included what we would now call liberals, moderates, and conservatives. Despite their disagreements, white Houstonians in each of these political orientations would not have suffered the kind of surveillance, ostracization, or stigmatization that socialists suffered. That is, while New Deal Democrats, for example, remained unpopular among many white Houstonians, the city’s “reactionary community” targeted groups and persons they believed to be working with or compromised by communism. Because one of the animating questions here is how white Americans managed to adapt to the civil rights claims of black Americans, rooted as they were in liberal individualism, this chapter works to tease out how liberal individualism worked in tandem with evolving racial formation schemes. Thus, while a study of white communist racial identity evolutions remains to be completed—it is doubtful that white leftists did not practice racial identity politics despite their disavowal of such politics—I focus on this mainstream because of its commitment to individualist philosophy.

¹¹ Social psychologists maintain distinctions between each of these. Values are those idealized and enduring standards by which people assess actions and societal conditions. Beliefs, closely related, though sometimes only tentatively so, are the assumptions and lenses through which people interpret the world. While a person may value liberal individualism, for example, they may believe that race is biological or that the world is inherently “just,” and that the conditions of marginalized people reflect their merit rather than their historical inheritances. Attitudes describe people’s affective dispositions. While they may believe in white supremacy, they may also value individualism, and therefore, may be disgusted by acts of racial violence, even as they remain disinterested in racial equality. Attitudes tend to mirror the predominant socially acceptable expression of widely held beliefs. Actions most immediately reflect attitudes more than beliefs or values, but are always influenced by a specific context. American ideals of individualism have long been in tension with sexism, racism, and classism, and thus Americans have always been struggling to find a racial project that satisfies their ideals and their status quo simultaneously. Dan Voich and Lee P. Stepina, *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Values and Political Economy Issues* (Greenwood Publishing

Group, 1994); Melvin J. Lerner, *The Belief in a Just World: A Fundamental Delusion* (New York: Plenum Press, 1980).

- ¹² Riverside Terrace came to be, in Houston's social geography, the city's "Jewish community," where wealthy and middle class Jewish citizens could find and build stately homes on large plots of land, after having been "barred from River Oaks and other elite subdivisions by the 'gentlemen's agreement.'" The gentlemen's agreement was the tacit understanding among non-Jewish white folks that they would not sell or re-sell real estate to "undesirable" groups of people. Riverside was not entirely Jewish, but it was one of the few affluent areas where they could build and develop without "social restrictions." Kaplan, "Race, Income, and Ethnicity: Residential Change in a Houston Community, 1920-1970," 186; Jon Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale* (Houston, Texas: Riverside Productions, 2007).
- ¹³ "Washington Terrace [Brochure]," n.d., box 2, folder 5, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL.
- ¹⁴ "Washington Terrace [Brochure-2]," n.d., box 2, folder 5, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL. Developers understood that some buyers opposed the idea of relinquishing their power to do with their property whatever they willed. Thus, such developers often added the caveat that restrictions in their deeds were meant to protect property values and infringed on individual property owners' prerogatives minimally and only insofar as it would maintain the values of all properties in the development.
- ¹⁵ Houston trailed only behind Miami's metropolitan growth, where white Americans had managed a massive land grab from Seminoles in the late 1920s and where black Americans and migrants from the Caribbean were arriving in large numbers during the Great Migration. Cities more often compared with Houston—Dallas and Atlanta—experienced 22 percent and 23 percent metro area population growth, respectively, from 1930 to 1940. The third fastest growing metropolitan market was Washington, D.C., and while its 43 percent growth was 4 percent behind Houston's, the District of Columbia and its suburbs added 290,544 people compared with Houston's 170,151. Arno H. Johnson, "New Census Shows City Suburbs Are Fastest Growing Markets," *Sales Management* 31 (1940); Planning and Development Department, "Historical Population: 1900 to 2013 City of Houston," n.d., http://www.houstontx.gov/planning/Demographics/docs_pdfs/Cy/coh_hist_pop.pdf; *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999*, 119th ed. (Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau, 1999), 871, <https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1999/compendia/statab/119ed.html>; Kaplan, "Race, Income, and Ethnicity: Residential Change in a Houston Community, 1920-1970." On Miami see Connolly, *A World More Concrete*, 64–70. Houston had been growing rapidly in part as a result of the September 8, 1900, hurricane that devastated what was previously Texas' fastest growing city: Galveston. Many investors and families abandoned the island and moved inland to Houston, which provided more security from flood surges than did the shores of the barrier island. Additionally, the Texas oil boom, which included the striking of oil at Spindletop in Beaumont in 1901, increased interest in the development of what would become the heart of the region's economic infrastructure: the Houston Ship Channel. Prior to the port's development, merchants in the east Texas area traded through Galveston. Traders and businessmen had been attempting to develop a port through Houston that could bypass the island's port management since prior to the Civil War, complaining of the exorbitant "charges and losses" they faced doing business there. However, financing had remained a formidable impediment to the Houston Ship Channel's development until the early twentieth century, when the city convinced Congress to invest in the completion of a twenty-five foot channel in 1910 by promising to pay one half of the costs and guaranteeing that the project would remain publicly-owned. Roy Montgomery Farrar, *The Story of Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Ship Channel 1820-1926* (Houston: Houston Chamber of Commerce, 1926); Don E. Carleton, *Red Scare: Right-Wing Hysteria, Fifties Fanaticism, and Their Legacy in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014).
- ¹⁶ Pruitt, "For the Advancement of the Race," x; Pruitt, *The Other Great Migration*.
- ¹⁷ Historian John Garrison Marks explains that in spite of the ordinance, free black folk continued to live in Houston. Despite many white Houstonians' complaints about black non-productivity and criminality, many of them, especially those wealthier and more powerful, benefited from the domestic and service labor free black people provided. Free black people, Marks argues, bargained for space in Houston's

urban economy, as they did in other cities across the South, and thus despite exclusion ordinances, remained part of the city's sociopolitical fabric. "Old Colored High," n.d., box 1, folder 7, Patricia Smith Prather Collection MSS.005, AAL at the Gregory School, HPL (first quote); John Garrison Marks, "Community Bonds in the Bayou City: Free Blacks and Local Reputation in Early Houston," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 117, no. 3 (2014): 271 (second, third, and fifth quotes), doi:10.1353/swh.2014.0022; Alwyn Barr, *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995*, 2nd ed. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996), 9 (fourth quote). Also, on the Houston ordinance and Texas laws governing free black people's residency and criminal statuses, see Harold Schoen, "The Free Negro in the Republic of Texas, IV," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (1937): 169–99.

¹⁸ Kaplan, "Race, Income, and Ethnicity: Residential Change in a Houston Community, 1920-1970"; Cheryl Caldwell Ferguson, "River Oaks: 1920s Suburban Planning and Development in Houston," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 104, no. 2 (October 1, 2000): 210; Bruce J. Weber and Charles Orson Cook, "Will Hogg and Civic Consciousness: Houston Style," *Houston Review: History and Culture of the Gulf Coast* 11, no. 1 (1980): 21–38.

¹⁹ The racial restriction said that "no property shall be conveyed to any person other than of the Caucasian race." "River Oaks Corporation, Houston, Texas, Reservation, Restrictions, and Covenants in River Oaks Addition," 1924; Cheryl Caldwell Ferguson, *Highland Park and River Oaks: The Origins of Garden Suburban Community Planning in Texas* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014), 202; Charles O. Cook and Barry J. Kaplan, "Civic Elites and Urban Planning: Houston's River Oaks," *East Texas Historical Journal* 15, no. 2 (1977): 29–37. These attitudes and explicit declarations of "white-only" space would continue in some wealthy white developments even into the 1950s. The Briargrove subdivision, established in 1954, is situated a little less than ten miles west of downtown Houston. It is bounded to the north by Woodway Drive, to the south by Westheimer Road, to the east by Briarwood Drive, and to the west by Briargrove Drive. "Briargrove," Briargrove Property Owners, Inc., accessed May 6, 2015, <http://briargrove.org/>. The entire subdivision is less than five square miles. Although established after *Smith v. Allwright*, the Briargrove Development Company included in its deed restrictions the stipulation that: "No part of Briargrove shall be conveyed to, owned by, leased to, used or occupied by persons other than of the white or Caucasian Race, except that bona-fide servants of other races may occupy servants' quarters." They also mandated: "No garage or servants' quarters shall be used as a residence except that the quarters may be used as a residence for servants actually employed on the premises." Strict architectural and aesthetic requirements, alongside these racial restrictions, would ensure the desirability of the neighborhood. "RESTRICTIONS BRIARGROVE ADDITION SECTION 5 through SECTION 8," n.d., box 3, folder 8, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL. Neighborhoods like Briargrove, in what would come to be "Mid West" Houston, remain heavily racially segregated. Dustin Cable, "The Racial Dot Map," Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, July 2013, <http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/Racial-Dot-Map>; "American FactFinder," United States Census Bureau, 2010, <http://factfinder.census.gov/>.

²⁰ William C. Hogg to Mike Hogg, May 8, 1925, box 2J363, William Clifford Hogg Papers, University of Texas Archives, Austin, Texas; Robert M. Fogelson, *Bourgeois Nightmares: Suburbia, 1870-1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 128; Ferguson, "River Oaks," 192; Kenneth E. Gray, *A Report on the Politics of Houston*, vol. 2 (Cambridge, Mass.: Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, 1960).

²¹ *Report of the City Planning Commission, Houston, Texas* (Houston: The Forum of Civics, 1929), 25, <https://www.hathitrust.org/>.

²² Carrington Weems, interview by Mike Vance, August 9, 2006, Houston Arts and Media Oral Histories. MS 524, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University; Harold Kellock, *Parson Weems of the Cherry-Tree* (New York: The Century Co., 1928); "Benjamin Francis Weems," *Weems Collections*, n.d., <http://weemscollections.com/benjamin-francis-weems>; Texas Historical Commission, "[Historic Marker Application: M. L. Weems House]," 1991, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Texas Historical Commission, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph460548/>.

²³ Oveta Culp Hobby was the powerful editor of the *Houston Post*. Her husband, William P. Hobby had been

governor of Texas, 1917-1920. Gus Wortham owned the powerful American General Insurance Company, and Jesse Jones served as U.S. Secretary of Commerce in the 1940s. Herman and George R. Brown owned the influential Brown & Root construction company as well as the Texas Eastern Corporation, which transmitted natural gas. The “others” were Robert E. “Bob” Smith, an oil and real estate investor, James Abercrombie, an iron works developer, and Judge James Elkins, influential lawyer and banker. As noted in the first chapter, these people comprised “8F,” the city’s true power brokers between the 1920s and the 1950s. Joseph Pratt, “8F and Many More: Business and Civic Leadership in Modern Houston,” *Houston History Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 2–7, 31–39; Weems, interview; “F. Carrington Weems - Honors, Achievements, Awards and Publications,” *Weems Collections*, n.d., <http://weemscollections.com/>.

²⁴ Glenn Feldman, *The Irony of the Solid South: Democrats, Republicans, and Race, 1865-1944* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013), 198; Michael Keith Honey, *Black Workers Remember: An Oral History of Segregation, Unionism, and the Freedom Struggle* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). In fact, black domestic labor was so valuable to white River Oaks families that in 1953 when Houston Transit Company bus drivers’ harassment of black riders began to prevent black workers from arriving to work on time or at all, “several prominent River Oaks women” protested the company. “River Oaks Citizens Complain,” *Houston Informer*, September 5, 1953, 1.

²⁵ Houston remains highly segregated by race and class in the twenty-first century, and white families continue to occupy the most “desirable” properties in the city, especially considering those closest to the city’s several business districts. Over time, subdivisions like Southhampton and Glendower Court, developed from muddy farmlands to blacktopped, manicured suburbs, have returned on their initial investments for property owners several times over. In 2010, the Southhampton area ranked, along with the River Oaks area and the enclaved city of West University Place, as the only community where more than seventy-five percent of households earned more than \$75,000 per year. In Glendower Court sixty-nine percent of households earned more than that amount. Less than two percent of the residents in both Glendower Court and Southhampton were black in 2010. These areas of wealth remain disproportionately white. See 2010 U.S. Census data.

²⁶ Those neighborhoods near Rice University form a larger community called Boulevard Oaks and are a part of the University Place super neighborhood. “Southampton [Pamphlet 1],” n.d., box 1, folder 31, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL; “Southampton [Map],” n.d., box 1, folder 31, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL; “Southampton [Pamphlet 2],” n.d., box 1, folder 31, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL; Marshall Verniaud, *Southampton: A Mini-History of the First 50 Years* (Houston: The Southampton Civic Club, 1975), 1.

²⁷ Carter came of age in Sherman, Texas, a small town north of Dallas, before his family relocated to Houston in 1892 at the age of thirty-five. He had primarily been a lumberman until the Panic of 1907, when the New York Stock Exchange’s dramatic fall propelled several businesses and banks into failure. Seizing the financial opportunity opened by skittish bankers and merchants, Carter “sold his substantial lumber interests and chartered the eponymous Lumberman’s National Bank...” Over the next several years he “absorbed” Jesse Jones’s National City Bank, Central Bank & Trust, and American National Bank, and in 1923 changed the company’s name to Second National Bank. In the interim, he co-founded the Tryon & Carter lumber company and gave Houston its first skyscraper and Texas its tallest building: “a sixteen-story steel-frame and brick building on Main at Rusk,” proving to the city’s skeptics that Houston could safely reach new heights. Kate Sayen Kirkland, *Captain James A. Baker of Houston, 1857-1941* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012), 192 (first quote), 200 (second quote); Kate McCormick and Kris Holt, *Southside Place* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 10; Betty T. Chapman, “‘Carter’s Folly’ Fooled Critics as First Houston Skyscraper,” *Houston Business Journal*, October 1, 2006, <http://www.bizjournals.com/houston/>; *Houston and South Texas: A Newspaper Reference Work* (Houston: Houston Chronicle, 1921), <http://archive.org/details/houstonsouthtexa00hou>; *Men of Affairs of Houston and Environs: A Newspaper Reference Work* (Houston: W. H. Coyle and Company, 1913), 17, <http://archive.org/details/menofaffairsofho00hou>; “Carter Realizes One Big Ambition When Home Is Completed,” *Houston Post*, October 26, 1924, 25.

²⁸ “Houston Bank Devises Plan,” *Houston Post*, October 26, 1924, 25; “Invitation Issued To Houston People To Visit Building,” *Houston Post*, October 26, 1924, 25; “Glendower Court [Ad],” *Houston Post*, April 19,

1924, 13 (first quote); "Glendower Court [Pamphlet]," n.d., (second quote), box 3, folder 27, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL; "MAMMOTH AUCTION SALE," n.d., box 3, folder 27, Houston Subdivision Collection MSS.0118, HMRC, HPL (third and fourth quotes).

²⁹ For a look at the referenced 1960 document, see the "1960 Renewal and Extension" PDF at "BOCA Deed Restrictions," 1960, <http://www.daveshine.org/BOCADeedRestr/BOCADeedRestrictions.htm>. On River Oaks, see Ferguson, *Highland Park and River Oaks*, 202.

³⁰ These and the other quotes throughout this section from former Riverside residents, as well as the details of the Caesar house bombing, can be found in the documentary Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*, unless otherwise noted.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ "Caesars Link Hoggatt In Home Deal," *Houston Informer*, June 28, 1952, sec. 1, 10.

³⁴ Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

³⁵ "Caesars Link Hoggatt In Home Deal," 10.

³⁶ The property no longer exists at this address. As Riverside Terrace transitioned into a mostly black community, several blocks of homes were bulldozed to make way for Highway 288 in 1959. Chris Lane, "The Changing Face of Houston - Riverside Terrace," *Houston Press*, October 13, 2014, <http://www.houstonpress.com/arts/the-changing-face-of-houston-riverside-terrace-6394303>. For more on patterns of racial discrimination against Riverside residents once the neighborhood racially transitioned, see Lawrence Wright, "Easy Street," *Texas Monthly*, November 1982, 174–81..

³⁷ Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ "Houston Comes Through," 2. The editorial column did not identify the exact location of this attack, and the white press did not cover the story. The *Informer* likely reported on the story in detail in its Tuesday edition, but only the Saturday papers were available.

⁴¹ Carter Wesley, "Negroes Harassed," *Houston Informer*, May 21, 1952, sec. 2, 2.

⁴² Stephen Meyer, *As Long As They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999), 3.

⁴³ See, for example, "Third Explosion Occurs While Couple Sleeps," *Houston Informer*, July 13, 1950, sec. 1, 1; "Governor Refuses To Intervene In Bombing Of Negro Houses In Dallas: 25 Homes Bombed; No Arrests," *Houston Informer*, July 15, 1950, sec. 1, 1; "Bombings In Negro Addition Terrorize Residents: Citizens Cry: How Long Will Our Civil Rights Be Ignored?," *Houston Informer*, June 30, 1951, sec. 1, 1; "Negro Citizens Refuse To Move In Spite Of Bombs And Buyers," *Houston Informer*, February 3, 1951, sec. 1, 1.

⁴⁴ Carter Wesley, "The Real Responsibility," *Houston Informer*, May 21, 1952, sec. 2, 2; on "encroachment" see Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

⁴⁵ Wesley, "The Real Responsibility," 2. Historian Nathan Connolly points out that black property owners in Miami also benefited from price gouging black renters. The artificial constraints of a racist housing market on black residential choice created opportunities for white and black real estate agents to form unholy alliances that capitalized on black poverty, overcharging black people for homes and failing to deliver repairs and services. This was likely the case in Houston as well, where a study on housing in 1948 revealed that since 1940 "16,000 new dwelling units" had been built in the city, with only "1,791 for nonwhites." Forty-five percent of all black homes in the city were assessed as "substandard." At 1420 Mason Street in Fourth Ward, Rufus Baldwin testified that the lot had "one house with four rooms and the landlord has cut that house in half in two and getting \$22 a week for four rooms." Sid Hilliard testified that similar situations existed in black areas throughout the city, noting: "I can give you an

instance where some of my people have rented houses from some of the builders at \$5 a week. They are three-room apartments. Recently those people they rented the house from instead of renting it for \$5 a week they would either have to share their three rooms or their rent would be raised to \$12.50." One woman, he noted, "had to move out of her house and make room for two other families to move in because she wasn't able to pay that kind of rent" as the job only paid \$20 per week. *Study and Investigation of Housing: Hearings before the Joint Committee on Housing Eightieth Congress, First Session, 1961, 1648-49.* Also see Connolly, *A World More Concrete*.

⁴⁶ "Mrs. Mattye Hilliard Buys Wichita St. Home," *Houston Informer*, July 12, 1952, sec. 1, 1.

⁴⁷ Jack Ginsburg, "Atty. Ginsburg Writes To Atty. Percy Foreman On The Jack Caesar Case," *Houston Informer*, August 16, 1952, sec. 1, 1, 10.

⁴⁸ "Caesars Link Hoggatt In Home Deal," 1, 10.

⁴⁹ Ibid. Inflation calculations reflect purchasing power and are provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistic's Consumer Price Index calculator.

⁵⁰ Ginsburg, "Atty. Ginsburg Writes To Atty. Percy Foreman On The Jack Caesar Case," 1, 10.

⁵¹ Wesley expressed amusement at Hilliard's unexpected wrench in the neighborhood association's plan to keep their neighborhood white. He recounted the events leading up the association's announcement that it needed to develop a new plan of action, noting that it all began as a matter of a white family making a private decision to sell their home. The Caesars were able to buy and move in because there were "no enforceable restriction[s]" against their "moral and legal right" to live on the property. Like the lawyer he was trained to be, Wesley systematically deconstructed the violations of the Caesars' rights by the association and individual "hoodlums" who had been terrorizing the family. He also lambasted black leaders who appeared to have been co-opted by the white segregationists, calling them "Negroes chosen by whites to tell other Negroes what to do." He shamed them as a collective "thorn in our side in yesteryears," the modern day "Uncle Tom." Attacking Hoggatt by name, Wesley was clear that he did not intend to be unkind, nor to suggest that Hoggatt was a race traitor, but maintained that Hoggatt had allowed himself to be constructed as white people's "safe Negro" in a volatile situation. Wesley encouraged black leaders to work in the favor of the Caesar family by consulting them on their wants and needs, and asked city officials and the real estate board to offer no platform to the rabble-rousing efforts of the homeowners' association. "These are the kinds of things that riots are fed on," Wesley wrote. A representative from the Houston Realty board, however, attended one of the homeowner's association meeting in July and promised to "take proceedings immediately to disbar or to revoke the license of anybody who sold to Negroes in the Wichita area." Carter Wesley, "'Ain't That Sump'n?," *Houston Informer*, July 12, 1952, sec. 1, 2; Carter Wesley, "Back To Reason," *Houston Informer*, July 19, 1952, sec. 1, 2.

⁵² "Mrs. Mattye Hilliard Buys Wichita St. Home," 1, 10. Black Americans certainly resented the kinds of sentiments Smiley expressed. Black folks across the country remained distressed, as they had been for some time, at such hackneyed arguments rooted in unsubstantiated Negrophobia. They declared, "Negroes are repulsed by the prospect of living in an area where racial discrimination and segregation pervades every facet of life." Despite their repulsion, black Americans also understood that they had a right to find the best homes for themselves and that racial segregation had never provided them opportunities to buy within their best means. Smiley's suggestion, then, was no suggestion at all, and completely misapprehended the desires of black homebuyers. Roy Wilkins to John F. Kennedy, "Re: Racial Discrimination in Federally Assisted Housing in Cocoa, Florida," November 20, 1962, Papers of the NAACP, Part 24: Group III, Series A, Administrative File, General Office File, Discrimination, Housing, 1954-62.

⁵³ The reporter wrote, "On questioning, [Smiley] explained that the reason white people do not want to live next door to Negroes is an issue of 'biological phenomena,' intimating that he and the persons whose sentiments he expressed believed that Negroes want an opportunity to cohabit with whites rather than opportunities for better housing when they move into white neighborhoods." "Mrs. Mattye Hilliard Buys Wichita St. Home," 1, 10.

The following quotes from *This is Our Home It Is Not for Sale* highlight the economic "concern" most of

the interviewees espoused upon reflection of the events in Riverside:

"We didn't know at the time how many black people or black families had the money to buy homes in this area. So that even though we felt comfortable in their moving to a higher socioeconomic area, we didn't know whether they had the lasting power. And, if they didn't have the lasting power, then they would resell the house to someone with lower socioeconomic needs, and consequently the neighborhood would deteriorate."

"When someone comes along and says that the value of your house may decline because a 'less desirable' element is perceived in buying next to you, you're gonna wanna protect your investment. And that was the approach that I think I heard verbalized from most people. It wasn't that there was anything wrong with the people. It wasn't that they weren't nice people. It wasn't really that they were any more, uh, anti-black than they would have been anti-Semitic or anti-anything-else. It was that they were basically saying, 'Is this going to change our economic values of our homes?'"

⁵⁴ "Pair Charged In House Bombing," *Houston Post*, April 18, 1953, sec. 1, 1, 5; "Two Held in Home Bombing," *Houston Chronicle*, April 18, 1953, sec. 1, 1; "To Hold Bomb Hearing," *Houston Informer*, May 2, 1953, sec. 1, 1.

⁵⁵ Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project.

⁵⁶ "Pair Charged In House Bombing," 5.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 1, 5.

⁵⁸ "Law Enforcement Is Always The Answer," *Houston Informer*, April 25, 1953, sec. 2, 2.

⁵⁹ Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ "Pair Charged In House Bombing," 5; Jim Whisenant, "Explosion Rocks Home in Riverside," *Houston Chronicle*, April 17, 1953, sec. 1, 1.

⁶² For a brilliant and engaging telling of Ossian Sweet's story, see Kevin Boyle, *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age* (New York, N.Y.: Henry Holt and Co., 2005). Details about the days following the bombing are in Donald Caesar's testimony in Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

⁶³ Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

⁶⁴ "Howell Denies Bomb Charge," *Houston Post*, April 19, 1953, sec. 1, 1, 12.

⁶⁵ "Two Held in Home Bombing," 2.

⁶⁶ "Two Charged In Bombing Of Home," *Houston Chronicle*, April 19, 1953, sec. B, 5.

⁶⁷ "Law Enforcement Is Always The Answer," 2.

⁶⁸ Howell's prosecution did not go as smoothly as some hoped. He consistently denied his involvement throughout the investigation and after his indictment by the Harris County Grand Jury. He and Davis, if convicted, faced a maximum sentence of twenty years for charges of possession of a bomb, arson, and property damage. One official recalled the difficulty of convicting Howell based on the circumstantial evidence and Davis's testimony alone: "The rule in the state court is that you cannot convict a person upon the uncorroborated testimony of an accomplice. And Davis did indicate he would testify against Howell, but we never could prosecute Howell because we didn't have enough evidence." Even though Davis got the minimum sentence and Howell was not prosecuted, Wesley believed that Houston had proven itself different than its peer southern cities, and believed Houston's black residents need not fear future bombings against their homes. Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*.

⁶⁹ Carter Wesley, "[Asking] For Trouble," *Houston Informer*, December 19, 1953, sec. 1, 2.

⁷⁰ Davis's prosecution was underwhelming. He received the minimum sentence of two years, even after his attorney, M. Gabriel Nahas, claimed that the former convict was harmless and an ignorant pawn in Howell's scheme. A state's witness, peddler Ocher Chumley, undermined the defense's claims, arguing that in December of 1952 Davis offered him \$100 to help blow up the Caesar home. "Davis Gets 2 Years

In Bombing," *Houston Informer*, June 25, 1953, sec. 1, 1, 10; Carter Wesley, "Bombing Trial," *Houston Informer*, June 25, 1953, sec. 1, 2.

⁷¹ The unnamed woman recalled her family's feelings in Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*. Jack Caesar reported on the family's activities immediately after the bombing: "Pair Charged In House Bombing," 5.

⁷² Meyer, *As Long As They Don't Move Next Door*; Barbara Celarent, "Caste, Class, and Race by Oliver Cromwell Cox," *American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 5 (2010): 1664–69; W. Lloyd Warner, "American Class and Caste," *American Journal of Sociology* 42, no. 2 (1936): 234–37.

Indeed, in 1960 the evidence suggests black Houstonians at all income levels, en masse, simply lacked the residential choices that their white counterparts had. Census tracts where white people were likely to live shared a number of correlated favorable qualities—and many of these qualities were covariates (i.e., education, income, profession, employment, and poverty, for example, are likely to be related in the whole population). In these predominantly white or all-white tracts, residents above the age of twenty-five years old tended to have at least a high school diploma. The people who lived in these tracts tended to have careers in management, sales, office work, and crafts, while they were highly unlikely to do domestic work for pay. Male and female unemployment were negatively correlated with these highly segregated white tracts, as was the overall poverty rate of the community within the tract. White census tracts also correlated with homes in "sound condition," as opposed to those that were "deteriorating" or "dilapidated." Residents living in these tracts were also likely to own a car and unlikely to have neighbors who lived in cramped accommodations.

As the proportion of black residents in a census tract grew, each of those factors exhibited reverse directionality in their correlations. Unemployment and poverty rates rose and levels of education and housing quality fell. However, apart from demonstrating that white Houstonians tended to have—on average—higher levels of completed formal education and its concomitant benefits in jobs and housing, these correlations reveal little about the socioeconomic diversities within these broad racial groups, and whether that diversity mattered when it came to housing. For example, they don't reveal that as the rate of high school completion among white Houstonians rose, unemployment rates fell while as the rate of high school completion among black Houstonians rose, unemployment rates remained unaffected. They don't show the stronger positive correlation between the proportion of white residents with college degrees and the proportion of white people with professional careers relative to non-white college degree earners with professional careers (0.896 versus 0.603). That is, highly educated black people were less likely to find jobs and live around neighbors with careers that were commensurate with their years of completed schooling. And they don't make clear that lower-middle-class black families were more likely to live in census tracts with higher proportions of poverty than lower-middle-class white families and white families who were actually impoverished themselves. See 1960 U.S. Housing data for these correlations.

⁷³ At the community level, GRTHOA began making plans to restore their community's racially restrictive covenants, despite the *Shelley* ruling. Wesley responded to the news by writing, "Restrictive covenants are no better than the will of each owner out there to refuse to sell to Negroes." He predicted Riverside's racial turnover was imminent: "Once Negroes move into a section, white tenants get jittery. Even if they agree in hard-and-fast terms not to sell, some one of them is going to get scared and decide the values are going to depreciate, and then he is going to sell." Wesley made sure to emphasize that the problem was not black homebuyers, for they could not buy what was not for sale. If white homeowners and their agents were willing to enter into financial transactions with black folks, each party had the right to do so. Carter Wesley, "Restrictive Covenants," *Houston Informer*, April 25, 1953, sec. 1, 3. Wesley made additional comments in a later column, too: Carter Wesley, "They Mean It," *Houston Informer*, June 20, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

⁷⁴ George McCelvey, "The Case of Heman Sweatt vs. The State of Texas," *Rice Thresher*, December 4, 1948, 5. For the integration efforts preceding Sweatt, see Laverne, *Before Brown*, 200; Judith Kilpatrick, "Desegregating the University of Arkansas School of Law: L. Clifford Davis and the Six Pioneers," *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (2009): 123–56.

⁷⁵ Coy W. Mills, "Alumnus Mills Questions Race Attitude of Students," *Rice Thresher*, December 18, 1948, 2, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

- ⁷⁶ Robert McIlhenny, "Staff Replies to Mills; Answers Three Questions," *Rice Thresher*, December 18, 1948, 2, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁷⁷ Coy W. Mills to Brady Tyson, January 5, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁷⁸ Brady Tyson, "The Editor Replies," *Rice Thresher*, January 8, 1949, 2-3, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁷⁹ William V. Houston to Brady Tyson, February 14, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University; also see Melissa Kean, *Desegregating Private Higher Education in the South: Duke, Emory, Rice, Tulane, and Vanderbilt* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 2008); "Sta[t]es Policy At Rice," *New York Times*, February 20, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University; "Houston Explains Charter Provisions Of Rice Institute," *Rice Thresher*, February 19, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁸⁰ "Is It Sentiment or Law?," *TSU Herald*, February 19, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁸¹ Franklin Reed, "Rice Editor Seeks Admission of Negroes," *Houston Post*, December 21, 1948, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁸² W.V. Houston, "Disposition of the Negro: We Must Face the Problem," *Rice Thresher*, March 2, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁸³ Ibid.
- ⁸⁴ Thurmond was greeted by H. R. Cullen, who planned a reception for Thurmond and other celebrity faces for the Dixiecrat cause. "Leaders of States' Rights Democrats Arrive At Houston For Opening Of Campaign," *Lewiston Evening Journal*, August 12, 1948, 14; "Dixiecrats Meet To Launch Drive," *Free Lance-Star*, August 10, 1948, 1; "States Rights Democrats Rally In Houston," *Sarasota Herald-Tribune*, August 15, 1948, 9.
- ⁸⁵ Kari Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968* (Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2003), 140.
- ⁸⁶ Brady Tyson, "Letter to J. Strom Thurmond," *Rice Thresher*, September 1, 1948, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Rice University: Woodson Research Center, Houston, Texas.
- ⁸⁷ Goldstone, "Heman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law," 5.
- ⁸⁸ Louis Dumont, *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 95; Mark Elliott, *Color Blind Justice: Albion Tourgee and the Quest for Racial Equality from the Civil War to Plessy V. Ferguson* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 40. Also, for a succinct summary of racial liberalism vis-à-vis racial radicalism, conservatism, and neoconservatism, and the relationship of each to color-evasiveness, see Daryl Michael Scott, *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880-1996* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000).
- ⁸⁹ Carl F. Kaestle and Eric Foner, *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 82; F. G. Swanson, "Mirror, Not Capital, Place To Look, He Says," *Houston Post*, September 23, 1953, sec. 2, 4.
- ⁹⁰ J. Strom Thurmond to Brady Tyson, September 1, 1948, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ⁹¹ Frederickson, *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968*, 142.
- ⁹² John Ed Pearce, "Dixiecrats Cloak Their Ambition With a Show of Southern Piety," *Courier-Journal*, October 18, 1948, sec. 1.
- ⁹³ Steven Hoelscher, "Making Place, Making Race: Performances of Whiteness in the Jim Crow South,"

Annals of the Association of American Geographers 93, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 659 (first quote), 662 (second and third quotes).

⁹⁴ Pearce, "Dixiecrats Cloak Their Ambition With a Show of Southern Piety."

⁹⁵ On the issues of space as property and social imagination, see Robert O. Self, *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2005), 17–18. On whiteness as an "object" appropriately recognized as property and its attendant "rights of use and enjoyment" see Cheryl Harris, "Whiteness as Property," in *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White*, ed. David R. Roediger (New York: Schocken, 1999), 103–18; George Lipsitz, *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006). On humanity as the "absence of blackness," and black folk as "not-quite-humans" in a black feminist analysis of "human," see Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*. For excellent and profound treatment of race and class as intersectional and the evolution of white identity in the post-War era as wrapped up in homeownership in exclusive, white spaces, see Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*.

⁹⁶ L. C. Christian to Coy W. Mills and Brady Tyson, December 21, 1948, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ "Constitution Day Dinners Are Told God Segregated Races," *Houston Post*, September 18, 1955, sec. 2, 3. Dating back to Linnaeus in the early eighteenth century, this chain was the result of an increasing obsession with classifying the natural world scientifically, but also reflected how suffuse that science was with religious presuppositions. The chain began with the inanimate and ended with the Christian god, and in between ranked creatures from least to most intelligent and in groupings they appeared most related to. He divided *homo sapiens* into six categories: Wild Man, American, European, Asiatic, African, and Monstrous. In the late eighteenth century, Johann Friedrich Blumenbach, credited as the founder of anthropology, took Linnaeus's unranked human categories, argued that they comprised one human species, and suggested that the "Caucasian" was the original type from which all others developed. Philosophers, naturalists, physiologists, and phrenologists through the remainder of the eighteenth and into the nineteenth centuries took Linnaeus's and Blumenbach's works and sought to elaborate a hierarchy of humans, and came to see a "Negro-ape connection." At least some of these scholars then purported that "these Animals [the Negroes]" represented the gradual separation of "the Soul of Man... from the Soul of Beasts." So it was very unlikely that when Judge Brady addressed the diners—claiming that integration was "the force for evil," that the NAACP was a "Communist front organization," and that integrationists were "pseudo-intellectuals" infiltrating American schools—that he felt he was exaggerating. For the intellectual descendants of racialized science, infused as it was with powerful religious implications, integration was an affront to both the Christian god and Man—where Man, of course, was a synonym for white. Winthrop D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968), 220–21 (Linnaeus's list), 223 (first quote), 230 (second quote), 231 (third and fourth quotes) and in general on the Great Chain of Being, Christian thought, science, and the development of race, see 216–65; "Constitution Day Dinners Are Told God Segregated Races," 3. The intellectual result of this evolution of ideas was the creation of "dysgenic humans," those groups whom white thinkers had decided were evolutionarily dysselected: "a category comprised in the US of blacks, Latinos, Indians as well as the transracial group of the poor, incarcerated, indigenous, and so forth populations become real objects via the conduit of evolutionarily justified discourses and institutions, which, as a consequence, authorizes Man to view himself as naturally ordained to inhabit the space of full humanity." See Weheliye, *Habeas Viscus*, 28.

¹⁰⁰ Roberta A. Morrison, "'Apartheid' Will Last, Mrs Morrison Predicts," *Houston Post*, August 9, 1953, sec. 3, 4; "Houston Opinion Is Divided," *Houston Post*, May 18, 1954, sec. 1, 3 (Hansen and Winans quotes).

¹⁰¹ Morrison, "'Apartheid' Will Last, Mrs Morrison Predicts."

¹⁰² Christian to Mills and Brady, December 21, 1948.

- ¹⁰³ Carlyle Van Thompson, *The Tragic Black Buck: Racial Masquerading in the American Literary Imagination* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 88.
- ¹⁰⁴ Jordan, *White over Black*.
- ¹⁰⁵ Christian to Mills and Brady, December 21, 1948.
- ¹⁰⁶ Indeed, in the twentieth century, "agitation" was a frequent epithet used by southerners to describe "outsiders" who they perceived were impinging on local affairs. Communists and civil rights proponents were all seen as agitators, and especially so when black civil rights organizations were seen as gilded fronts for Marxist agents. For example: James A. Miller, *Remembering Scottsboro: The Legacy of an Infamous Trial* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Laura Jane Gifford and Daniel K. Williams, *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). John A. Clark to Brady Tyson, January 20, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ¹⁰⁷ John A. Clark to Alfred Groner, January 20, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- ¹⁰⁸ Parker J. Parker to Brady Tyson, n.d., box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University. Parker James Parker may have been a transplant to Houston from rural Alabama. This is my strongest lead, but the evidence is too sparse to make any conclusions. "1940 U.S. Federal Population Census (Enumeration District: 4-5, Sheet 6A)" (James, Bibb County, Alabama, April 15, 1940), Publication No. T627_4, National Archives and Records Administration., <http://heritagequestonline.com>.
- ¹⁰⁹ Lisa Lindquist Dorr convincingly demonstrates that "white women's role" in the world of racial reproduction was to be "the symbolic guardians of white purity and virtue." Dorr, *White Women, Rape, and the Power of Race in Virginia, 1900-1960*, 6. Pitirim A. Sorokin, "The Case Against Sex Freedom," *This Week Magazine* (*Houston Post*), January 3, 1954, 19.
- ¹¹⁰ As Sharon Block points out, however, for many white Americans in the early years of the republic, white women could not consent to sex with black men. Therefore all sexual encounters between these were necessarily understood to be coerced. Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*. On hypodescent see David Hollinger, "Amalgamation and Hypodescent: The Question of Ethnoracial Mixture in the History of the United States," *American Historical Review* 5, no. 108 (December 2003): 1368, doi:10.1086/529971.
- ¹¹¹ John H. McCray, "South's Courts Show New Day of Justice," *Baltimore Afro-American*, July 11, 1959, 3, ProQuest Historical Newspapers; McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, xviii; "Editorials: Another Dixiecrat Headache," *Pittsburgh Courier*, June 20, 1959, City edition, A4 (final quote), ProQuest Historical Newspapers. Also see Danielle L. McGuire, "'It Was like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle," *Journal of American History* 91, no. 3 (December 1, 2004): 906-31, doi:10.2307/3662860.
- ¹¹² Wesley, "Segregation's Double Standard," 2. As far as school segregation and sexuality were concerned, Wesley's readers scoffed with him. Joe Robinson, a black resident of the Houston Heights neighborhood, wrote: "Integration in schools to the white; it makes them think of the social contact which they believe will lead to inter-marriage; but to the Negro people it is just another step toward absolute freedom, which we so rightfully deserve. We are human beings, who openly want to live and be respected as human beings." Robinson continued, noting as many black men speaking in public did, that "inter-marriage" was as "bitterly rejected" by black men as it was by white Americans, and he predicted "this is most unlikely to happen." He pointed out that "the white, mexican, chinese, japanese, and all other races go to school down here together [sic]" without incident. If Americans could see each other as human beings, if they could be empathic enough to "understand our fellow man's problems," the promise of democracy could be fulfilled. Robinson did not—at least not publicly and perhaps smartly so—follow the logical conclusion of his argument: the erasure of the significance of racial difference would render the rules and customs of racial endogamy culturally unintelligible. A. C. (Joe) Robinson, "On Racial Progress," *Houston Informer*, August 28, 1954, sec. 1, 12. On the topic of interracial marriage, black civil rights activists often spoke out in favor of rescinding anti-miscegenation

laws, but generally with the caveat that they did not “intend to endorse interracial marriage.” Peggy Pascoe, *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 176.

- ¹¹³ Bob King to Brady Tyson, January 8, 1949, box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University; for Watchtower see Andrew Webster Jackson, *A Sure Foundation: A Sketch of Negro Life in Texas* (Houston: [publisher not defined], 1940), 482.
- ¹¹⁴ Helen A. Hunt to Allan Shivers, June 18, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Of course, we must ask of these letters whether they can be trusted as sources. Are the writers saying what they mean? Is there something lost in the silences? I feel quite positive that I can trust these letters to be frank and honest. These are private citizens writing to a governor who is not merely sympathetic to segregation—he’s one of its staunchest defenders. So when Mrs. Hunt writes that she firmly believes in the Constitution, I believe her. I also think she’s quite honest when she writes in the letter that she cannot overcome her prejudice against black people. She recognizes black people as citizens, she appreciates that they, like her, live in the world of Man. And yet, she can’t convince herself that black people are truly her equals.
- ¹¹⁵ Wilma Lindsey to Allan Shivers, May 25, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- ¹¹⁶ V. P. Lance to Allan Shivers, May 24, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. Leslie G. Carr argues that the denial of nationhood to black people is a pivotal component of racialization. *“Color-blind” Racism* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1997).
- ¹¹⁷ R. E. L. Middings to Allan Shivers, May 25, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission. I found Middings in the 1940 U.S. Census: “1940 U.S. Federal Population Census (Enumeration District: 255-120, Sheet 4B)” April 12, 1940, <http://heritagequestonline.com>.
- ¹¹⁸ J. F. (Jack) Connelly to Allan Shivers, July 18, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- ¹¹⁹ Jack Attman to Allan Shivers, December 1, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; Kay L. Gate to Allan Shivers, July 2, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; John R. Brougher to Allan Shivers, May 19, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- ¹²⁰ Anonymous to Allan Shivers, “What Would God Do About Segregation? Would He Continue On With His Plans As In The Beginning Or Would He Change Over and Adopt The Thoughts And Ideas Of Walter White And The NAACP?,” 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- ¹²¹ Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*.
- ¹²² Kean, *Desegregating Private Higher Education in the South*, e-book.
- ¹²³ All quotes from Tighe’s letter found in Charles Tighe to Brady Tyson, n.d., box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Ibid.

CHAPTER 4: TROUBLE ON THE BUS: MAKING THE “NEGRO CRIMINAL” AND KEEPING NEGROES IN THEIR “PLACE”

Bessie Pavlicek had been an unwitting part of the action. October 11, 1951. It was a cool autumn Thursday in downtown Houston, nearly ten degrees below the average high for that time of year. Pavlicek and her seven-year-old daughter Kathryn were at Main and Preston and on their way to Foley's department store, a popular shopping destination on the southern end of downtown. After letting her daughter board before her, Pavlicek walked up the steps to the bus and asked Houston Transit Company bus driver Florian Antone Nowak if his route would take them to Foley's, but he seemed distracted. "Then at that time I saw a negro standing [in] the aisle talking to a big white man," she recounted. Trouble. Nowak demanded that the black man, Johnnie Lee Morris, sit down. However, the passenger refused, so the driver "handed him a transfer, and told him to get off the back way." Everything was happening so quickly. The black man refused to exit through the rear of the bus and insisted on leaving through the front where Pavlicek was standing. It was then that she saw the knife. He pulled it out of his pocket, "raised his hand," and "brushed the side" of Pavlicek's face with the blade. The woman grabbed her daughter and "stepped back down to the sidewalk." From there she watched for a moment as the two men struggled on the bus. Panicked, she ran into a nearby business and asked the store personnel to call the police. She never did see the stabbing. By the time police arrived, bus operator Nowak had been fatally wounded and Morris had fled the scene.¹

There was no doubt, according to some Houstonians, that the yet unidentified "Negro" involved was "a murderer."² The Houston Transit Company and the local bus

drivers' union offered a substantial reward to any party that helped capture the assailant.³ Indeed, many white Houstonians seemed automatically willing to disregard any of the unique details of the case; during Morris's eventual trial, several venirepersons had been dismissed because they could not offer an acceptable answer to the question: "Do you believe a Negro has a right to defend himself against a white man to the extent of taking the white man's life if the Negro believes that his life is in danger or that he will suffer serious bodily injury from the white man?"⁴ For white Houstonians who imagined that self-defense was a white man's prerogative, Morris had to pay for the stabbing, which, regardless of the circumstances, was a crime. Nowak deserved justice.

Morris's eventual arrest also reflected white supremacist investment in property and space. Morris was initially captured for his rebellion against Texas's anti-miscegenation statutes. He and his wife, a white woman he had married out of state, moved to Houston and shared a small apartment at 416 Saulnier Street, one of the many residences in Fourth Ward that would eventually be razed to make way for the Gulf Freeway. By breaking with Texas's racial caste system, and doing so blatantly near the heart of the city's business district, Morris had pushed beyond his circumscribed place. A bothered black sheriff's deputy reported Morris and his wife, and the two were arrested, prior to any suspicion that he was Nowak's killer. His interracial romance had resulted in his capture, and his act of self-defense against a white attacker placed him squarely in the crosshairs of a biased criminal court system.⁵

Johnnie Lee Morris's travails elucidated a limit of the color-rejecting vision espoused by Houston's black leaders and their white allies. Earlier in the century, black attorneys had won several important Supreme Court cases challenging the open operation of racial prejudice in the nation's criminal courts. The Supreme Court had been reinterpreting the

clauses in the Fourteenth Amendment since the late nineteenth century, and increasingly so in the twentieth century as black defendants in criminal trials raised issues of equal protection in their challenges to lower court procedures and decisions. Legal scholar Melissa L. Sanders argues that the nation's courts increasingly construed the Fourteenth Amendment as a doctrine of colorblindness, despite that the framers' intent was not to prevent states from acknowledging color or the historical consequences of racism, but rather to prohibit them from creating or maintaining castes based on color.⁶

In some instances, and increasingly so after the First World War, the Supreme Court's interpretations provided some relief to black Americans facing discrimination in lower courts. In *Moore v. Dempsey* (1923) and its series of Scottsboro decisions in the 1930s, the nation's highest court signaled that it recognized, in some capacity, that equal protection under the law was pivotal to individual self-determination. In *Moore* the Court decided that each of the twelve black farmers in Arkansas who had been convicted of murdering five white men during a riot had been denied due process. The lower courts had failed to investigate and acknowledge the defendants' claims that the threat of mob violence surrounding the case prevented the administration of a fair trial. The victory followed the appointment of a defense team by the NAACP, and, historian Megan Ming Francis notes, that decision is pivotal "to understanding how and why the NAACP became a massive and successful litigation engine a few decades later." Significantly, *Moore* was the first of several interwar-period cases wherein the Supreme Court reviewed, remanded, or reversed the decisions of lower courts in criminal trials. It began a pattern of practice wherein the nation's highest court would redefine the meanings of equal protection and due process, neither of which had been written into the Constitution until Reconstruction. For Morris, this meant a trial devoid of mob violence. However, Morris's trial was not absent of all

violence. His best witness disappeared during the early procedural filings in the case; Morris's attorneys cited intimidation against her. Morris himself alleged that his confession was forced after sheriff's deputies tortured him. And black reporters from the *Informer* noted that they had been refused access to Morris or his wife while the two were incarcerated while white reporters from the *Post* and *Chronicle* had been granted access to the jail and thus had been given the power to weave a narrative that would direct public opinion against Morris—including the opinions of those who might be chosen to sit on the petite jury.⁷

About a decade after *Moore*, in *Powell v. Alabama* (1932), *Norris v. Alabama* (1935), and *Patterson v. Alabama* (1935), the justices ruled that the Fourteenth Amendment rights of Ozie Powell, Clarence Norris, and Haywood Patterson, three of the infamous Scottsboro Boys, had been violated. The legal saga was an important stage for the International Labor Defense, a communist organization, which battled for nearly five years with the NAACP over defense strategies and efforts in the cases. The nine young boys and men, ranging from ages twelve to nineteen, had been accused of raping two white women, Victoria Price and Ruby Bates, twenty-one years old and seventeen years old respectively. All of the Scottsboro boys were found guilty, and a jury sentenced all except twelve-year-old Roy Wright to death. In *Powell*, the Court reckoned that Alabama's failure to ensure that the defendant had effective counsel was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment's due process clause. In Norris's appeal, the Supreme Court found that the systematic exclusion of black citizens from jury rolls by the State under the pretense of race-neutral statutes disregarded equal protection and due process. And for Patterson, the Court confirmed that such exclusion was grounds for a retrial.⁸

Legal scholars, recognizing that racial disparities still plague the American criminal court system, despite the rulings in the interwar-period cases, argue that each was limited in its scope and that, while none guaranteed that black Americans would receive equal protection, even if they received a “fair trial” by the courts’ standards, they did prime white Americans to “hide” racial discrimination “in the criminal justice system... behind discretion.” Indeed, constitutional law scholar Susan N. Herman argues that “fairness” was a standard manufactured by the courts and that the decisions in the Scottsboro cases eschewed the question of “equality,” which would critically consider the historical consequences of racial discrimination in court proceedings and case law as pivotal to ensuring due process. In the late twentieth century, the Supreme Court decided in *McCleskey v. Kemp* (1987) that empirical evidence of racial discrimination against black defendants in death penalty sentences was not enough to prove that the defendant, Warren McCleskey, had been personally discriminated against when he too was sentenced to death in Georgia after killing a white Atlanta police officer. If anything, legal scholar Michael J. Klarman argues, the Scottsboro and *Moore* cases set a precedent for mobilizing black communities to become active participants in an increasingly noisy civil rights agenda in the mid-twentieth century. However, insofar as legal impact was concerned, the cases did not necessarily yield greater procedural or civil rights for black Americans. “The most that *Norris* seems to have accomplished anywhere—and even then only in large cities in the peripheral South,” Klarman wrote, “was place a single black person onto an occasional jury.”⁹

The Supreme Court continued to challenge explicit racial discrimination in the nation’s lower courts through the following decades in an effort to excise, from the criminal justice process, procedural errors that violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Of course,

getting prosecutors and attorneys to avoid making errors was not the same thing as ensuring black citizens received equal protection and due process, even if the trial was deemed “fair.” It meant, instead, that the agents of the court would evince no *intent* to discriminate against Morris on the basis of race. For Communist sympathizers in such racially charged criminal cases, the Supreme Court could take credit for taking “great care to instruct” lower courts on how to legally execute “lynch schemes” while restoring faith in the moral authority of the criminal court system. By the time of Morris’s trial, then, he was still subject to the racialized machinations of the Harris County Criminal Courts—a system that had adapted to the new normal in the Supreme Court’s application of the equal protection clause. The courts had learned to evade color—or at least had learned to appear to do so.¹⁰

Johnnie Lee Morris’s case was a high-profile demonstration of how well the Harris County Criminal Courts had adapted to the Supreme Court’s rulings, how color-evasive white Houstonians managed to maintain a Jim Crow court as the 1950s began, and how black people’s commitment to individualism compelled them to concede that the decision in Johnnie Lee Morris’s case was “fair,” even though the practices and procedures of the entire trial were characteristic of segregation. Whether Morris’s attorneys could have convinced white Houstonians of his innocence with a structuralist argument remains uncertain, as there are few indicators that white Houstonians or agents of the courts acted in good faith in racially charged trials. However, it is clear that the defense team were true believers in liberal philosophy and law. Despite Morris’s guilty verdict in a case where black Houstonians were convinced of the righteousness of his actions and his right to self-defense, his black supporters resigned that he had gotten a “fair trial” in a Jim Crow court because of the apparent absence of mob violence and blatant appeals to racial animus. Morris’s case

revealed how racial tokenism, color-evasive peremptory strikes, and avoidance of explicitly racist appeals could provide a strong rhetorical defense for the all-white prosecutorial team, the all-white courts, and the all-white jury from claims of discrimination. Black Americans also legitimated that system by accepting, as evidence of progress, that Morris had at least been spared mob violence or legal execution. The case also functioned to *make* Morris a criminal and to authorize white people to determine the consequences for black people who forsook their circumscribed “place” in American society.

For the first time in its history and in order to find Florian Nowak’s assailant, the Houston Police Department used television to spread information about a murder and to solicit information from Houston-area residents. A hat found at the scene that had been purchased in San Francisco turned out to be critical evidence in the initial questioning of Morris. Houston’s newspapers went into a frenzy after the stabbing of Nowak. The *Houston Post* ran several front page stories about the killing. Nowak had only been on the job for about three months when he was killed by “a ‘smart aleck’ Negro [who] was fired from a South End drive-in grocery because of his attitude, who then went to work for an attorney as a yard man.” The newspaper claimed that the unnamed attorney’s wife said that she gave the employee “a shirt similar to the one the slayer was reported wearing.” Despite this matter-of-fact description of the “slayer,” the *Post* did not have a name. It turned out that these reports were grossly inaccurate; Morris was a longshoreman.¹¹ That is, despite not having much evidence about the suspect, white Houstonians and the white press had already been cultivated to see him as a working-class Negro who refused to stay in his place, complete with a sour disposition and a chip on his shoulder.¹²

Johnnie Lee and Christine Morris had been married in Nevada and moved to Texas where their marriage transgressed the state's anti-miscegenation statutes. On October 14th, three days after Nowak's stabbing, the two rested in bed in their Fourth Ward apartment. At 10:30 P.M., Harris County Sheriff C. V. "Buster" Kern, Captain Lloyd Frazier, and Deputies Paul Anderson and Alvin Baker (who was black and reported the Morris couple to Sheriff Kern) entered their home, "made them dress," and arrested them on suspicion of miscegenation and vagrancy. While they questioned Johnnie Lee downtown, officers found a ticket stub from a movie theater in San Francisco in his coat pocket. Soon, they had extracted a "signed statement" from Morris "saying he had stabbed the bus driver," and on October 17th, without having had any opportunity to consult an attorney, he admitted to the stabbing before Judge A. C. Winborn, arguing that he had acted in self-defense. Officers then searched his apartment where they found a bloody undershirt, and with Morris's directions, a jack-knife hidden "in a hole in the floor under the shower bath."¹³

Johnnie Lee was indicted for murder, officially charged with killing Florian Nowak "with malice aforethought...by cutting and stabbing him with a knife." Christine was charged on a separate offense of miscegenation, despite her husband's claim that she was "part Negro and part Czechoslovakian." Officers denied that Christine was anything but white. Sheriff Kern made sure that Mrs. Morris remained unavailable to *Informer* reporters and NAACP representatives, including Christia Adair, all of whom continued to press county jail officials for the opportunity to talk with the incarcerated woman. Denied legal representation and a sympathetic press by a Jim Crow Sheriff's Department, the Morris couple's narrative remained shaped by the city's white media.¹⁴

The city's black press, under Carter Wesley's leadership, remained cautiously defensive. "Heavenly Houston's" black residents were aware that the relative tranquility of race relations in their city was tentative and based on their compliance to the demeaning protocols of Jim Crow "etiquette." As Wesley's *Informer* kept black Houstonians abreast of developments in the case, "arous[ing] the steam of more people than any other case of its type ever to happen in Houston," Christia Adair began a fundraising campaign for Johnnie Lee Morris's defense. For Adair, the case presented not only an opportunity for Houstonians to reckon with the vestiges of segregation on public transportation, but also a chance to acknowledge the ways Jim Crow allowed white men to regulate—or at least attempt to regulate—the sexual behaviors and desires of white women and black men. With a competent defense team, she believed the Morris case could deliver several victories for Houston's black community. By dramatizing a case wherein "a white woman" was "happy with him [a black man] and wanting him," Morris's defense could undermine white men's claims that black men had unrequited and insatiable demands for white women and were therefore a risk to those women. The case might also force an equal protection appeal, since Harris County's criminal courts practiced a pattern of excluding black people from petite juries, and considered them "not qualified" to serve in cases of interracial violence. If the rest of Houston could understand the significance of Morris's case as righteous transgression against Jim Crow segregation, then, Adair believed the NAACP would "prove that we had people in all walks of life that could not only serve on juries but could do anything."¹⁵

Black Houstonians rallied behind the work of Adair and the NAACP. Throughout the early 1950s, black citizens made frequent complaints about mistreatment by Houston's white public servants. And in the aftermath of Nowak's death, many of those citizens

reported “numerous incidents” of police officers “threatening [them] with the Morris case in their minds and the Morris case on their lips.” “Negro interest” in the case focused on getting Morris “a fair and impartial trial,” but with a sense that the outcome of Morris’s case would bear widespread implications for the entire community. A “fair trial” had a decidedly firm definition for Morris’s supporters. It could only be “the realization of a raceless democracy,” wherein “considerations of race” would be “effectively eliminate[d]... from actions of police and courts.” Such a trial would require an impartial jury that was willing to recognize that Morris had a legitimate claim to self-defense.¹⁶

Lulu B. White, responsible for “revitaliz[ing] the Houston NAACP” in the late 1930s, and her nightclub-owning husband, Julius White, were central to the fund-raising effort. Julius White asserted, “We believe there is more behind the scenes of this case than the newspapers are telling.” He speculated, “Johnny Lee was jumped on that bus,” and concluded that, “We are going to get a lawyer who will represent him fairly.” Over the two weeks following Morris’s arrest, the fund, which was officially set up to assure that Morris received his “fair trial,” was “steadily on the increase,” with donations from “every area in the county” and from black and white residents.¹⁷

Two weeks and over \$5,000 into the defense fund-raising effort, the NAACP retained the services of Henry Doyle, William J. Durham, and Thomas H. Dent, a trio of black lawyers who would later come to be known as the “3 D’s.” Dent was a graduate of Howard University’s law school and “the first Negro ever to be admitted to a southern bar group.” He was known for successfully obtaining a reversal of the death sentence of Herman Lee Ross, of Galveston County, in 1949 by successfully arguing that Ross had been denied due process because of systematic racial discrimination in the process of grand jury selection. Durham had been educated in the law offices of white attorney Ben F. Gafford



Image 5 Attorneys U. Simpson Tate, Merrill Booker, William J. Durham, and Carter Wesley conferring. Date unknown. Michael L. Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (April 1978): 402.

and arrived in Houston from his own practice in Dallas. He had gained notoriety through the *Sweatt v. Painter* (1950) case, where he convinced the Supreme Court, alongside Thurgood Marshall, of the unconstitutionality of the University of Texas's segregated law school. Doyle had just graduated from the law school at Texas State University for Negroes in Houston the previous year as its first graduate and as "the first black graduate of any Texas law school." He took the role of principal attorney to "ensure that Morris's constitutional rights to due process and equal protection under the law... were enforced." Morris's case became a springboard for Doyle's distinguished career as an attorney and

judge. For now, however, this newly-hired defense team had quite a fight on their hands to disprove Morris's guilt and save him from the electric chair.¹⁸

While Morris's defense team prepared for trial, the Houston NAACP went on the offensive against local communists who had expressed immediate interest in Morris's case as well. Adair and others believed that getting Morris a fair trial included preventing communists from influencing public sentiment. Civil rights leaders and attorneys in Houston were well aware that association with communism would be a detriment to Morris's case. Indeed, throughout the early 1950s interracial coalitions like the NAACP came under regular attack in Texas and elsewhere, where white Americans accused them of being communist fronts. In 1956, Adair, Durham, and attorney U. Simpson Tate would fight alongside Thurgood Marshall to prevent Attorney General John Ben Shepperd from winning an injunction against the NAACP's operation in Texas. Adair recognized early on that Morris's case could not be associated with "subversive" elements in Houston, where Minute Women, a national and influential anti-communist group with about 300 members in Houston in 1951, were actively and regularly releasing propaganda against all social liberals. White Houstonians tended to agree with anti-communist rabble-rousers that communism was the antithesis of democracy, freedom, and individualism. Association with communists, no less during the Second Red Scare, could damage the NAACP's reputation among black and white Americans, and expose the organization, its leaders, and members to prosecution under the Alien Registration Act of 1940, which criminalized acts the United States government deemed "subversive." More extreme conservatives, such as one East Texas mom whose son had been sent to Korea to "shoot Communists" in service of "God and his country," suggested that Communists "here in our midst" be shot as well. From elsewhere, another mother, who reported that her son had defected from the United States military

and joined ranks with Korean Communists, claimed, “If they have really converted him to Communism maybe it would be better if they buried him.” Not all anti-communists suggested such dire wishes for the intellectual descendants of Marx, but “the majority of white Houstonians” respected and supported the kinds of anti-communist work in the city by groups like the Minute Women. And, importantly, Houston’s economic “power brokers,” who controlled municipal politics, remained committed to “the tradition of rugged individualism” that made communism anathema to their political philosophies. To present a compelling case, then, Morris’s attorneys developed a defense that remained consistent with the anti-communist sentiments of the time.¹⁹

Indeed, the Houston NAACP sought to protect Morris’s case from the kind of allergic reaction it might produce if communists were allowed to control its narrative or be seen as its patrons. Jane Bolin, the first black graduate from Yale Law School and a board member of the NAACP, left the organization in 1950 because she believed these fears of being labeled communist were paralyzing the group’s ability to deploy its most “effective tactics” in attending to the needs of the “American Negro.” Others argued that black civil rights were intimately tied to women’s rights and labor rights—that the struggle for racial equality could not be won by attention only to those issues that affected bourgeois black men. But by and large, middle class black leaders in Houston viewed communist interest in the Morris case as a political liability.²⁰

Local communists’ narrative surrounding the case was critical of the NAACP and what it viewed as the organization’s failure to attend to the ways classism and racism limited the possibilities of a “fair trial” for someone like Morris. They sought to expose how “white chauvinism” worked to “stimulate bourgeois nationalism,” and that the “Negro bourgeoisie,” which included NAACP administrator Roy Wilkins and the National Urban

League organizer Lester Granger, were incapable of effectively providing for defendants like Morris because they had “sold out to U.S. capitalism.” The communist message was that Morris was one target among many in “a sharp increase in discrimination and open terror against the Negro and Mexican peoples in Texas.” In addition to the raging problem of police brutality, Morris’s case demonstrated the particular impact wartime capitalism had on America’s racial minorities, especially in Texas, which experienced, more “than any other southern state,” industrial expansion. Morris, the communist magazine *Political Affairs* asserted, was caught in a “frame-up” after “defend[ing] himself against a white bus driver.”²¹

Like their communist counterparts, Morris’s NAACP supporters in Houston believed what happened on the bus had been an act of self-defense, but they did not buy the seeming anti-American tirades of communists against capitalism and the American military. Yet, substantively, and in terms of what kinds of defenses could be articulated in a criminal trial, there was not much difference between the Houston NAACP’s and local communists’ understanding that Johnnie Lee Morris had been a victim of prejudice and discrimination on the bus. Both groups also comprehended that long-standing patterns of intimidation and violence against non-white public transportation passengers provided an important contextual frame for understanding Morris’s claim to self-defense. Likewise, black Houstonians blamed the incident on “white arrogance,” and viewed “segregation as the cause of it all.”²²

Nevertheless, in complete opposition to communist interpolation in Morris’s legal defense, Christia Adair made it clear that “if the [NAACP] heads the fund raising for Morris, contributors and solicitors would be safeguarded from the brand of Communism through the use of NAACP receipt books and a careful screening of solicitors.” This was all the more pressing because District Attorney Sam Davis had already implied that he “expect[ed]

a group of Communists out of New York” to get involved with raising funds for Morris’s defense.” Leaving no room for confusion about the constituents standing behind the NAACP’s efforts, the *Informer* affirmatively reported that they were “swamped” with interest in the nascent defense fund by “people of both races who are known not to be Communists.”²³

While fighting to diminish the visibility of communists in defense of Morris, the *Informer* also took aim at American racism. The editorialists questioned if communism “represented the most serious present threat” to the United States. The writers argued, “There is another force quite as sinister, quite as subversive, quite as reactionary, quite as destructive, quite as hysterical, and much more dangerous to the realization of American goals.... [I]t is a force as unAmerican in its conceptions and goals as communism itself.” Segregationists who deployed McCarthyite red-baiting tactics to maintain the racial status quo, while “true enough” in their anticommunism, were “also opposed to the realization of the visions and hopes of the vast majority of Americans in many spheres.” If communism was the antithesis of liberal individualism, Jim Crow was its bosom buddy. For the *Informer*, neither of these could be congruent with the American ideal. Carter Wesley co-signed such a view with his own commentary, writing, “The Negro is some man. At the same time that he fights off communism stubbornly, he has to fight the demagogue and the racial supremacist of his own country doggedly.”²⁴

Both communism and racism, then, were antithetical to American individualism for mainstream black Houstonians. Their color-rejecting vision, “one of raceless equality,” was also a demand for “justice regardless of race.” True “Americanism,” the editorialists at the *Informer* opined, was “a broad term meaning love of the country and belief in the merit and righteousness of the national ideals.” It was the “antidote to communism,” the “approach to

society that takes into account individual merit without prejudice created by wealth, or position, or race.”²⁵ The color-evading courts were well-equipped to satisfy the low bar of *appearing* not to inject racist appeals before the Jim Crow jury.

Attorney Henry Doyle’s first successful step was in getting the court to order a writ of habeas corpus, where he and Morris would be able to present evidence that Morris had been unlawfully detained since October 14th by Sheriff Kern without bond. Morris appeared before the court for this hearing on November 7th. Doyle argued that although Morris faced a murder charge, the defendant was nevertheless “entitled to reasonable bail.” Getting a favorable decision proved not so easy for Doyle. District Attorney Sam Davis’s witnesses testified that Morris had committed “‘cold-blooded’ murder.” One witness admitted that Nowak “pushed” Morris, but qualified the narrative by saying the assault was “not hard.” Doyle believed that testimony was enough to reasonably doubt the murder charges, but Judge Winborn, and later the Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas, decided against Morris’s protestation that he was illegally detained. Both courts denied him bail. The first argument, an implicit claim to black people’s right to self-defense against white assailants, had failed.²⁶

The lawyers tried another tactic. Attorney Dent accused the Harris County Sheriff’s Office of illegally taking evidence from Morris’s residence at 417 West Dallas Street on the date of his arrest. Dent claimed that “between 9:30 P.M. And 10:30 P.M.” while Morris “was in his home... conducting himself in a peaceable and law-abiding manner and not violating any laws of the State of Texas,” deputies entered Morris’s apartment without consent. While Morris was ostensibly breaking the state’s miscegenation laws, a point which Dent chose to dismiss, the attorney maintained that Morris had not committed any felony in the deputies’ presence and was not a flight risk. The officers, without just

cause or a warrant, violated Morris's Fourth Amendment rights and subsequently found evidence of Nowak's murder that should no longer be admissible.²⁷

To make matters worse, they argued, in addition to the illegal detainment and the illegal forced confession, Morris had been "whipped, beat and struck" by two deputies, Alvin Baker and Red Williams, in the early morning hours before sunrise on December 15th in order to extract information about the location of the knife. Baker had joined Leo Busby as the "first black deputies hired by the Harris County Sheriff's Department" just a year prior. Baker and Busby would develop unsavory reputations among black Houstonians for questionable conduct throughout their service.²⁸ Following his arrest, Morris remained in police custody where officers questioned him "continuously" for three or four hours until about three o'clock in the morning. Dent claimed that Morris was subjected to threats of "physical violence," as police sought to extract a murder confession out of him in the case of Nowak's slaying. Morris admitted to signing "some form of written instrument" with police, though he claimed not to know what "the contents" of the document were in the present or at the time of the signing, because according to Dent, "[Morris] was in such mental state of mind that he could not comprehend the meaning of the language used in said instrument." In short, Morris's "free agency had been destroyed and his will power overcome" by the police officers who had instilled purportedly mind-numbing fear in the accused.²⁹

Building on his success in the Ross case, Dent moved to quash Morris's indictment, collecting evidence that demonstrated that the all-white Grand Jury Commission appointed by the "duly elected qualified" Judge A. C. Winborn, who was presiding over Morris's case, was only one collection of jurors in a "purposeful, systematic, and intentional" pattern of exclusion that kept black residents in Harris County from the commission over the course

of more than forty years. Drawing on argumentative language in the Supreme Court's decision in *Norris v. Alabama* (1935), Dent presented that of the "31000 male citizens" above twenty-one years old in the county, "more than seventy-five percent... were intelligent citizens, and were able to read and write the English language." He pressed that these men were "eligible to vote" and were not indicted or convicted of any felonies "at any time." He concluded, "But, notwithstanding all of the foregoing facts, [Judge Winborn] in the selection of said Grand Jury Commissioners included only white citizens... and excluded from the [Commission] all members of the Negro race and of African descent on account of race and color." Within the forty years preceding Morris's trial, only four black men had been chosen to participate as grand jury commissioners. As a result of this "deliberate... exclusion and limitation" of black grand jurors in criminal cases involving black defendants, he argued, Morris's indictment was necessarily a violation of the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment according to precedent set in *Carter v. Texas* (1900).³⁰

Criminal District Attorney Sam W. Davis denied all of Dent's allegations and conclusions. The D.A. argued that "at all times the District Judges of Harris County" have been aware "that a great proportion of the population" of the county "was composed of members of the negro race," and that the judges' decisions in appointing members of the Grand Jury Commission were based solely on the judges' collective desire "to have a fair, honorable, representative group of qualified citizens." It just so happened that Winborn had exclusively chosen white men, but if they were individually qualified and completed their work in a way that was "fair," Davis saw no violation of equal protection. He also noted that all members of the jury commission were "instructed" that they "not discriminate" when it came to the selection of grand jury members, but instead create a grand jury that was representative of "a cross-section of the qualified citizens of Harris County." Davis also

noted, since May 1939, “[P]ractically every grand jury has contained a member or members of the colored race.” He also recorded that there were “two members of the colored race” on the grand jury that true-billed Morris’s indictment.³¹ The Supreme Court’s precedent in equal protection cases allowed for state prosecutors to point toward this kind of tokenism to illustrate a lack of discrimination. It also illustrated the ways white supremacy had always depended on a class of black people to protect white interests. Longstanding historical patterns of all-white grand and petite juries could be abrogated seemingly with any evidence of a show of good faith on the part of district courts to not exclude black jurors. In Houston, this practice took the form of appointing token black members to grand jury commissions, which appointed grand juries that were then monopolized by white men. Indeed, courts became adept at not excluding as a convincing alternative to affirmative inclusion.³²

With this logic, Winborn overruled Dent’s motion and the Court of Criminal Appeals agreed, writing that *Norris v. Alabama* was “not authority” because it did not directly address racial discrimination in the selection of grand jury *commissioners*. The court presented itself as hand-tied by a lack of precedent, writing in its opinion: “We are aware of no case from the Supreme Court of the United States holding that an indictment in a state court may be invalidated solely because racial discrimination, within the meaning of the 14th Amendment, had entered into the selection and organization of the jury commissioners.” Judge Winborn and his two predecessors, Langston King and Frank Williford, all of whom were called as witnesses before the appellate court, testified that “it had never been [their] purpose” to “discriminate against any particular race or in favor of any particular race” in selecting their grand jury commissioners. Nevertheless, neither King nor Winborn were able to certify that they had ever chosen black citizens to sit on their grand jury

commissions. Williford had appointed all of the four black men who had served as commissioners since 1928. When this issue was appealed to the United States Supreme Court later in Morris's trial, Texas attorney general John Ben Shepperd argued that there was no precedent regarding racially biased selection of grand jury commissions and opined that if they allowed for a reversal of the lower court's decision a slippery slope of racial discrimination lawsuits at every level of the trial would bombard the courts. The State Supreme Court sided with Shepperd. The courts effectively decided, then, that black people did not have a right to privacy, did not have Constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizures, did not have a right to a trial by a jury of their peers, and could not use a pattern of historical discrimination against their racial group as evidence of discrimination against individual defendants.³³

Selection for the petite jury began on December 10th and continued into the 12th. Two hundred Harris County residents had been summoned from the voter rolls by the court's special venire. Jury selection was complete by the morning of December 13th, but the result was less than desirable for the defense. At the time, both the defense and the prosecution were entitled to fifteen peremptory challenges, wherein they could strike potential jurors without cause. Out of the two hundred citizens called to the jury pool, eleven of them, or about 5.5 percent, were black.³⁴ Willie Johnson had been immediately struck. The note left next to her name in red ink indicated that she was "female colored." Just "female" would have sufficed given that women were not permitted to serve on juries in Harris County at the time. The fact that Johnson's race was specified at all betrays the prosecutor's intent to exclude all black citizens from the final jury. According to Dent, District Attorney Davis exercised eleven of his peremptory strikes to remove all members of "the Negro race" from the jury. Though Davis could have justified some of his strikes on

account of some of the potential jurors' opposition to the death penalty, the court failed to require him to explain why he did not want any of the stricken black citizens on the jury. Meanwhile, the prosecution used zero peremptory strikes against the one hundred eighty-nine white potential jurors. Out of that number, they excused only two with justification: one for admitting to having already fixed an opinion in the case and the other for opposition to the death penalty.³⁵

Dent immediately filed a motion to quash the trial jury. He argued that Sam Davis and special prosecutor Spurgeon Bell, both white men, had "deliberately, intentionally, purposefully, and systematically" excluded the possibility of having any black jurors "on account of race and color" alone. The defense attorney pressed that the district attorney and all attorneys working with him were "performing a governmental function," and were therefore especially beholden to Constitutional provisions of equal protection and due process. Dent maintained that this was not an isolated event: the exclusion of black citizens from the petite jury in Morris's case "was done under a custom, system and practice inaugurated, promulgated and followed by Sam Davis... and his predecessors in office" for "more than forty (40) years." The motion narrowed the claim, specifying that Dent was only interested in looking at petit juries in criminal cases where black people were the alleged assailants in cases with white victims. The State had systematically excluded black venirepersons, despite when those "members of the Negro race on [the] special venire... had met all of the qualifications for jury service and had given no answer or answers to any questions... which gave [Davis] the right to challenge said prospective juror or jurors for cause." Although all women were excluded from serving, occasionally a black woman with a first name associated more closely with men, like "Johnnie," might be called and, upon

arrival, dismissed. In sum, the State had carefully and purposely crafted an all-white and all-male jury of twelve.³⁶

Anticipating the argument that black jurors had been both summoned and interrogated, that mixed-race juries were not a legal requirement, and that the peremptory strike relieved attorneys of the burden of justifying their strikes, Dent countered with a historical argument against tokenism. He pointed out that until the 1940 *Smith v. Texas* Supreme Court decision, Harris County criminal district attorneys “pursued a custom and practice of excluding every member of the Negro race... called for jury service in a criminal case.” The Supreme Court found that such a practice violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Nevertheless, Dent pointed out, the custom had not been changed; the all-white jury outcome remained a central feature in these criminal proceedings with alleged black assailants and white victims. The chicanery practiced by the district attorney should not be excused, Dent argued, saying:

[The same] custom and usage has been followed and was followed in this case under the guise of calling said Negro jurors and after said prospective jurors had answered every question propounded to them by the Criminal District Attorney and his associates... such answers being of such nature and substance as to give... no cause to challenge said Negro prospective jurors for cause.

The district attorney nevertheless dismissed all black venirepersons as potential jurors, and Dent argued, this was on its face a matter of racial discrimination. The practice of questioning black venireperson was theater—merely “token compliance,” or better yet, “a semblance of compliance” to the Supreme Court’s ruling, a “formality” meant to circumvent the substance of the equal protection clause.³⁷

Morris’s defense team pointed to evidence of racial discrimination in the selection of the jury in the case at hand. One example was in the *voir dire* examination of Jesse Mills, a black, fifty-six-year-old Harris County resident who swore before the court that he had no

fixed opinion of Morris's guilt or innocence, that the race of the defendant would not sway his opinion, and that he had no conscientious scruples with the death penalty. Black Houstonian Sherman Holmes also swore before the court that he would not oppose convicting a deserving man of death. Both of these men and other black men in the jury pool who were not opposed to capital punishment were excused by Davis without cause. The defense believed this adequately proved that the district attorney was using his peremptory strikes to create an all-white jury and maintain the courtroom as a white space that defined black place.³⁸ Despite this wealth of evidence, in which one hundred percent of potential black jurors were denied a seat in the court for no stated reason, Dent's argument would not stand in a court committed to evading the issue of group discrimination.

The district attorney swiftly and succinctly responded to Dent's allegations of racial discrimination in jury selection. First, he said that there were thirteen black men present for interrogation. Eight of them, he said, disqualified themselves: one had already determined Morris's guilt or innocence and the other seven did not support the death penalty. The remaining five "were excused by the representative of the state through the exercise of peremptory challenges authorized by the laws of the State of Texas." This was the only reason for the exclusion that the D.A. was required to offer. Furthermore, he contested, there existed no "system to intentionally excluded members of the negro race from service on the jury" and that several "members of the negro race" had served on juries in criminal cases over the past ten years, "though the exact number is not recalled at this time." Even if his unrecalled statistics were true, the D.A. sidestepped Dent's particular claim about cases involving black assailants and white victims. Without anything more than a scribbled sentence, the presiding judge overruled the motion. Another argument, this time about the

ways court cases like Morris's demonstrated the willful flouting of the rights of all black citizens was practiced by the so-called American justice system, had failed.³⁹

Despite repeated challenges by Morris's defense team, the Harris County Criminal Courts had evolved and adapted to the challenges they raised against its historically patterned procedures and practices. White county judges stood before appellate-level judges and testified that they had not systematically excluded black people from grand jury commissions, and convinced them, if they needed persuasion at all, that there was no legal precedent to reverse on error any case where, apparently by the luck of the draw, only white men had managed to secure seats on such commissions. Besides, they argued, each commission's job was to choose the grand jury, and the Harris County commissions had selected four black members to the jury in recent cycles. If there had been a pattern of discrimination in the past, they reasoned, it was clear that the courts were no longer engaging in such practices. Though the defense lamented this as tokenism, they could not develop an argument that the appellate court would accept. The same was true in the case of color-evasive peremptory strikes. The prosecution had all the tools it needed to create an all-white jury without having to answer questions about intent, motivation, or effect. In the eyes of the court, Morris was under no threat of being treated differently because of his race. As an individual, he would be seen by a group of individual peers who happened, as it were, to be white. Whether cases like Morris's demonstrated a pattern of racial discrimination in jury selection, where a black assailant had assaulted a white victim, was moot. The challenge that the defense team faced and could not overcome was that they were raising a claim of civil violation against the rights of all black people to be equally considered for jury duty and were attempting to do so within the context of a criminal case involving what they identified as damages to an individual client.

As Doyle, Durham, and Dent's pretrial motions failed, racial tensions remained high in the city, especially in the days preceding Morris's arrest and indictment. Frank Morrison, the man with whom Morris initially shared words while boarding Nowak's bus, reported receiving death threats over the phone. A mysterious caller allegedly told the witness, "You are next." Bessie Pavlicek claimed that she received "six calls within 40 minutes" on the night after the killing. Another Houstonian, working at a hat shop where Morris had supposedly purchased two hats in recent days, reported answering her phone to hear a "voice that sounded like that of a Negro woman." She asked, "What do you know about the bus driver being killed?" The hat salesperson responded, "What do you want to know?" The alleged call ended with the woman saying, "I'm warning you," followed by the click of the handset returning to the receiver. The hat salesperson reported receiving another mysterious phone call later that day from someone who "sounded like a white man." When questioned about other reports of threats by telephone to witnesses in the Morris case, District Attorney Davis told the press, "I won't say how many witnesses have been threatened, but we have assured every one subpoenaed that they will have complete protection." The *Chronicle* claimed that "more than half the witnesses, many of them passengers on the bus, have been warned to leave the county."⁴⁰

The staff at the *Informer* found these reports laughable, writing that, "The intimation that Negroes are intimidating and threatening these witnesses is tragic and altogether foolish." Gesturing toward a long history of their legal vulnerability to exploitation and abuse by white people, the editorialists at the *Informer* asked:

Since when have Southern Negroes begun to intimidate Southern white [people]? The shoe is actually on the other foot. The real truth is that Houston Negroes have been intimidated [to] no end by intemperate whites as a result of the unfortunate [Morris] affair. This intimidation began the day after the murder when a Negro postman was threatened with a knife.... It has been continued and spread since that time, having been taken up by no less potent a force than the members of the police

force itself.... Ludicrous stories of intimidation (obviously the work of crackpots or troublemakers, if true) and accompanying grandstand protection plays can do nothing toward guaranteeing a fair trial in the case.⁴¹

When a delegation of black Houstonians representing five of the city's civic organizations approached Davis about the reports in the *Chronicle* and *Post* about threatening phone calls to witnesses, the D.A. failed to offer an explanation as to how the names of the subpoenaed witnesses could have been known by anyone outside of his office. It seemed to black Houstonians that the district attorney had found a way to stoke the flames of racial fear without making racialized appeals directly before the court.⁴²

Carter Wesley blamed Davis for these “harum-scarum” stories. He sarcastically wrote about white people “yanking their telephones out, moving out of town, and seeking the protection of the district attorney’s office with fear in their hearts.” The *Informer* publisher asked, “Since when did white Texans become such cravens? Not only can no telephone voice run white men out of their homes in Texas, but people with guns can’t run them out.” The newspaper, instead, highlighted the fact that black citizens were victims of irrational white Houstonians, who were now running a story about an unnamed black man and woman who had been fired from their jobs by a white employer after the woman had been baited into a heated exchange over the Morris case by the boss. Black leaders in the city called for an end to what they claimed were false stories about black residents intimidating white people and pointed toward the more immediate, observable racial problem surrounding the case: increasing police brutality, which threatened “Houston’s prestige and good reputation.”⁴³

Meanwhile, threats against Morris’s sole black sympathetic witness seemed to be far more real. As the December trial date neared, the attorneys learned of an eyewitness named Laura Dell Dickson, a resident at 3114 Campbell Street in Fifth Ward. They believed



PART OF THE BIG CROWDS that converged on the Criminal District Courts Building early Monday, drawn by interest in the trial of Johnny Lee Morris, 23, is shown here on the steps outside the building. Morris is under indictment for the murder

of Florian A. Nowak, 30, city bus driver, who died at the wheel of his vehicle on Main at Preston after he was stabbed in an altercation with a Negro passenger who disappeared in the shopping throngs before witnesses realized what had happened.

Image 6 The press in the city, both black and white-owned, printed images and stories that highlighted black people's decorum around the trial, arguing both implicitly and explicitly that black Houstonians would not be incited to violence as a result of this case. For the white press, these images were less about salvaging the dignity of black Houstonians but rather presenting Houston as an exceptional southern city where a racially charged case could be peaceably tried in a court of law. *Houston Chronicle*, December 10, 1951, Sec. A, 8.

her testimony was "material evidence necessary for [Morris's] defense" and that the substance of her account would maintain that "a bus driver and a fat white man were beating a colored man; that when the colored man went to get off the bus the driver kicked the colored man down; that the colored man did not cut the driver until after he was kicked." Morris's counsel told him about Dickson, and afterward Durham applied for a subpoena to have Dickson delivered to the court to testify. However, the Sheriff's Department was unable to find the witness. Despite the value this potential witness had for the defense, Judge Winborn was unwilling to delay the trial and proceeded without Dickson's presence. Alvin Mitchell, an acquaintance of Dickson, testified that he had spoken

to Dickson on December 10th and that she had indeed told him that Morris was attacked by Nowak and an overweight white man. Mitchell said that Dickson “was afraid to come to the court because she was not going to be hurt, for they had already threatened Julius White.” Dickson told Mitchell she would “stay out of the way until the trial was over.” She never did make it to present her own testimony before the court.⁴⁴

Morris’s trial was swift. The charge of the court was given to the jury on December 14th, and they returned the verdict on the same day. Specifically, the charge ordered the jury to determine if “Johnny Lee Morris, did with malice aforethought kill Florian Antone Nowak by cutting and stabbing him with a knife.” If the jury was convinced that Morris’s testimony did “excuse or justify the killing,” the defendant was not guilty of murder. Murder was a voluntary act that required a sentence of death or imprisonment for not less than two years. To determine if murder was committed with “malice aforethought,” the jury would have to be convinced that Morris was of sound mind *and* intended to kill Nowak. If the jury believed that Morris was guilty of murder but not with malice aforethought, then they could not assess a penalty of more than five years of imprisonment. Murder without malice aforethought came about from the “immediate influence of sudden passion arising from an adequate cause, by which is meant, such cause as would commonly produce a degree of anger, rage, resentment or terror in a person of ordinary temper sufficient to render the mind incapable of cool reflection.” Thus, if the jury believed or had reasonable doubt to believe that Morris was provoked to the point of having his emotional and mental state altered, he would not be guilty of murder with malice aforethought and should receive the lesser sentence.⁴⁵

The charge of the court also specified the circumstances for acquittal. If the jury was convinced of Morris’s recounting of the events on the bus or maintained doubts about the

circumstances which led to the stabbing, Morris could not be found guilty. In particular, if the testimony that Morris had been unlawfully assaulted or was about to be unlawfully assaulted by Nowak, with or without the assistance of Morrison, so much so that Morris believed, regardless of the actual circumstances, his life or body was at risk, he was to be found not guilty of murder at all. The jury would have to be convinced “beyond a reasonable doubt” that Morris did not have any legitimate claim to self-defense in order for the murder charge to stand.⁴⁶

By the order of Judge Winborn, the jury would have to assess the evidence as to whether the stab wound inflicted by Morris was the actual cause of Nowak’s death. Attorneys Dent, Durham, and Doyle objected to this charge directly, arguing that “there is no competent testimony... that the alleged injury sustained by [Nowak] was the cause of his death; and there is no evidence from which any legal deduction can be made” about the injuries. Moreover, they argued, “The only testimony before the Court and jury at this time is that a knife, which was not described in evidence, could produce such wound; that there is no testimony before the Court and jury as to what organs of the body of [Nowak] were injured, or the extent of such injuries.” Furthermore, the only evidence available in regards to the stab wound itself should have produced reasonable doubt as to the severity of the wound, given that the “only legal testimony” in regards to the wound was made by “Justice of the Peace Thomas M. Maes, to the effect that he did not probe the wound, and he did not know the depth of said wound.” In all evidence concerning the case, none existed that sought to prove that Nowak was actually killed by Morris’s knife or that the stabbing was the cause of death.⁴⁷

The substance of Maes’s testimony, in fact, had only been that the three wounds on Nowak’s person “could have been inflicted by a knife.” Moreover, while several of the

prosecution's witnesses testified that Morris stabbed Nowak once in the neck, there was "no legal testimony in the record" which accounted for the two other alleged stab wounds. The defense counsel believed that to charge the jury with determining whether the stab wound killed Nowak was the same as "lead[ing] the jury to believe that there is legal and competent evidence in the record showing the cause of the death of [Nowak]," evidence of which simply had not been presented by the State. Winborn overruled most of the objections, though he did modify one of the court's charges. Instruction "#10" had included language which explicitly stated Nowak had been cut; Winborn modified it by handwriting the nonrestrictive clause "if he was cut." Despite the defense's efforts, foreman of the jury H. E. Logan signed his signature under the handwritten verdict and the jury returned to court. On December 14, 1951, Morris was guilty of murder with malice aforethought and assessed life in prison.⁴⁸

The defense counsel immediately went to work on an appeal and filed a motion for a new trial on January 30, 1952. They argued that the selection processes of the Grand Jury Commission and the grand jury members systematically excluded black citizens and thus violated the Fourteenth Amendment. Additionally, Dent, Doyle, and Durham charged the prosecution with willfully and purposefully using his peremptory strikes against the black venirepersons who had not disqualified themselves from jury service. The defense also remained troubled over the absence of Laura Dell Dickson, whose testimony they maintained had been of important material substance to the defense. The defense claimed they hired a private detective to locate Dickson and that she "could not be located" because "said witness had been intimidated and was in hiding." The defense objected to the inclusion of Maes's testimony, claiming that the qualifications of the Justice of the Peace to examine a bodily wound had not been established and that no evidence had been offered

that could help determine the type or size of knife necessary to inflict the damage alleged to have been observed on Nowak's body. The other testimony relating to the stab wounds, to which the defense objected in open court, was that of eyewitness Frankie Lee Dickey. She claimed to have seen the wounds but also admitted not knowing the depth or width of the injuries. Such testimony was not evidence that the alleged stabbing caused Nowak's death; at the very least, Dickey's memory was not sufficient to establish Morris's culpability in Nowak's death beyond a reasonable doubt. This amounted to "speculative testimony," not "expert opinion." In short, according to Morris's defense team, the guilty verdict had been returned by the jury "without any legal evidence in the record showing the cause of death of [Nowak]." The defense threw every technical claim they could muster at the court, perhaps hoping a new trial would afford Morris a friendlier jury. Winborn overruled the motion on February 2nd without comment.⁴⁹

Morris would lose his final legal battle on May 4, 1953, when the Supreme Court denied the Writ of Certiorari submitted by his attorneys, after the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals had already dismissed all of the defense's objections.⁵⁰ A black man still did not have the right to protect himself against a white man in Houston—certainly not to the point where a white man's life could be taken without consequence. White supremacy transformed Morris into a criminal. That is, crime and criminality are not objectively defined, but rather subjectively decided—and sometimes capriciously so. Participants in criminal court cases determine whether an act of homicide counts as justifiable self-defense or criminal murder. In Morris's case, they had decided that he had committed a crime. Nevertheless, that Morris's life had been spared was a victory unto itself for the defense team and black Houstonians, if not an indicator that the all-white jury was not entirely convinced that the defendant's actions were unwarranted by the circumstances.⁵¹

As Morris was escorted out of the courtroom, he passed by his wife Christine Morris. She kept her gaze straight ahead. When asked by the press about the verdict, she replied, "It was a fair trial. The verdict didn't surprise me. I thought he might even get death." Sid Hilliard also responded, saying, "The Southern people showed less prejudice during this trial, and they showed a definite tendency to be fair. But I didn't expect the sentence to be that severe after hearing the testimony." It was a hollow victory that demonstrated the limited legal toolbox which black defense attorneys could draw on to challenge discriminatory practices that gave the appearance of fairness. These limitations were inherent in a criminal court system that had been learning to adapt to such defense efforts since the late 1920s. The court's color-evasive tokenism and the district attorney's uncontested peremptory strikes were antithetical to the vision of raceless equality that black Houstonians had imagined for their city. But racial tokenism and exclusion went hand-in-hand in a "raceless" system dedicated to maintaining white supremacy. In these apparently color-rejecting ways, color-evading criminal courts could effectively remain white spaces with the privilege of defining racial place.⁵²

Johnnie Lee Morris had received all but a fair trial in a Jim Crow courtroom, yet his attorneys and his supporters suggested that his sentence, sixteen years of which he served before being paroled, functioned as an example of Houston's ability to cast aside prejudice in its courts. Black Houstonians were Americans through and through, and their commitment to liberal individualism was no less prevailing than among their white American counterparts. That commitment—coupled with the exigencies of everyday living, no doubt—is precisely what primed Morris's black sympathizers to accept the court's decision as valid. They, as much as white Americans, needed to believe that black Americans received fair treatment in the nation's courts and throughout society. In his presidential

campaign in 1952, Dwight D. Eisenhower described “equality of opportunity” without regard for race as the “unfinished business of America” that needed to be secured for black Americans lest the nation’s hypocrisy provide opportunities for “any group” to “betray the freedom of each of us.” Political scientist Ralph Bunche stressed, “We Americans have built a society in which every individual, whatever his race, creed or national origin, has a vital stake” and that while the United States had many “shortcomings,” the “more enlightened” among the citizenry had been correcting them. He wrote, “I have a simple faith in democracy as a way of life and in the unshakable devotion of the American people to it.” These kinds of pronouncements, practiced by white and black Americans, reassured them that fairness was an intrinsic element of American political philosophy, even if it was not always practiced. Their collective resignation to the jury’s and the court’s decisions in Johnnie Lee Morris’s case, indicated by their celebration of the defense team’s victory in convincing the all-white jury to spare Morris’s life as well as the lack of protest, agitation, or sustained discussion that followed that celebration, showed that black Houstonians were willing to take an inch to perhaps gain an ell later. Inadvertently, however, their silence functioned to re-legitimize a criminal court system that actively denied the legal claims and civil rights of black defendants and the wider black citizenry. And Doyle, who was credited with saving Morris’s life, witnessed a marked “increase” in his clientele following his “victory.”⁵³

Generally, white and black Houstonians did not live together—though, when they did, as was the case with Johnnie Lee and Christine Morris, it was illegal. They did not share the same “neighborhoods,” even when they occupied the same census tracts. Each group understood the (in)visible lines they must cross to move

from one racialized space to another—whether a street, a highway, or a bayou. By design, white and black neighborhoods existed all over the city, rubbing against each other. Black neighborhoods were often surrounded on all sides by natural barriers, white residential areas, industrial pockets, or undeveloped space. In this relationship, whereas whiteness made a space desirable, blackness marked it with negative stereotypes. In white folks' minds, blackness made space squalid, undesirable, and prone to criminality, and in turn, these understandings of black space could tattoo all black people likewise.

Segregation, therefore, remained critical to the criminalization of black people. As one white man in favor of residential integration in Baltimore lamented, white prejudices against black people started with and were perpetuated by practices of racialized spatial segmentation, saying:

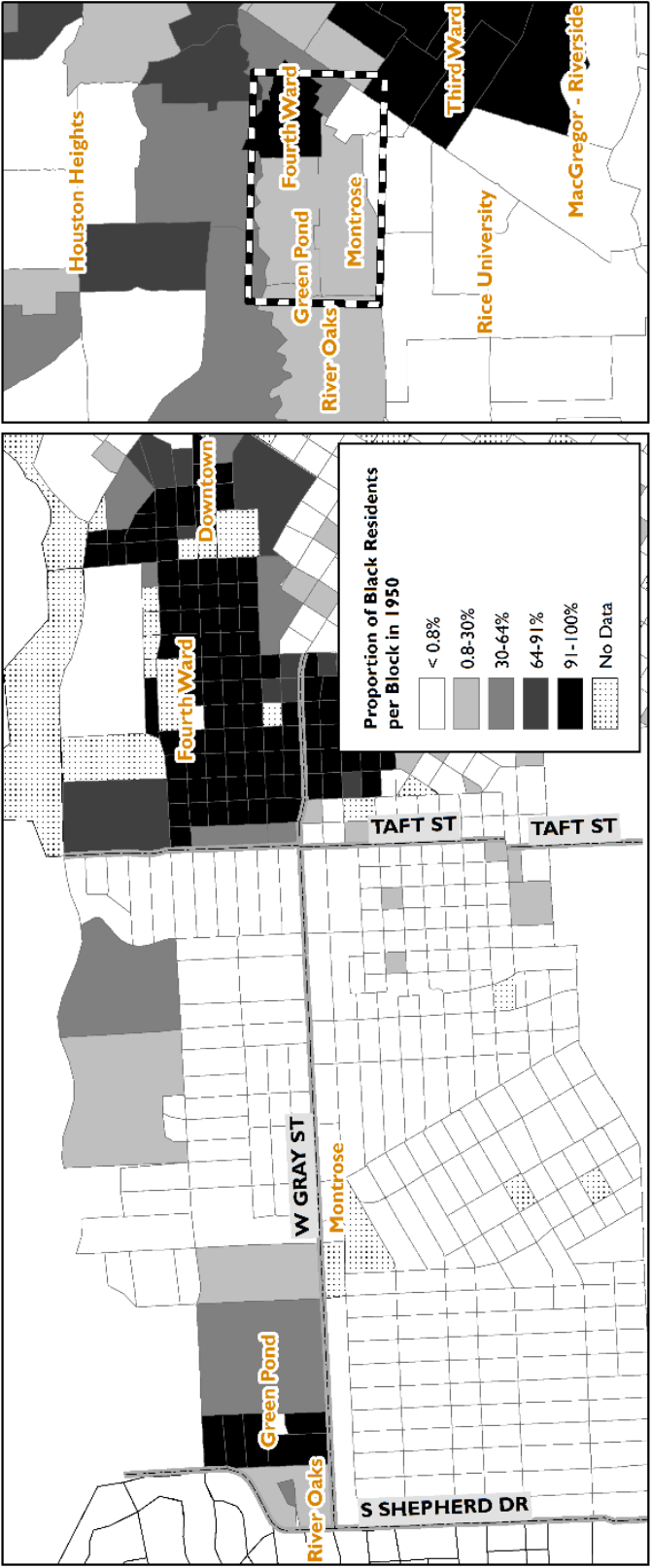
Acceptance of Negro families would be much easier for our people if we had less commuting to and from work by car. You have to drive through deteriorated districts where the residents are one hundred per cent Negro. This sorry picture is hard to shake, even though the [black] family a few doors down the street has no relation to it, other than the color of their skin.⁵⁴

Black Americans had been making similar arguments for a long time, noting, at the end of World War I, for example, that “[s]ensational newspaper publicity about crimes of Negroes, unpunished lawless acts of white persons against Negroes, misunderstandings, [and] fears and suspicions of the two races” were grounded in the fact that these groups “live almost in two separate worlds.” Confined to relatively small neighborhoods in the nation’s expanding metropolitan centers, “Negroes are neglected in public schools, public sanitation and health, fire and police protection and other public facilities,” while those black spaces remained accessible to the pleasure-seeking “red light element” of white people. These inequities were rooted in “restrictions on property rights,” which was the “origin” of “much of the antipathy toward” America’s black citizens. The racialization of space, therefore,

precipitated the criminalization of race, and together these two compelled the criminalization of space, a process which became reinforced by the meting out of color-evasive justice in the Harris County Courts.⁵⁵

This dynamic would play out again in a high-profile crime committed in Houston in 1959. Twelve-year-old Billy Bodenheimer was robbed, raped, and murdered near his home in Montrose, a collection of mostly- or all-white small city neighborhoods that had previously been suburbs, situated between the heavily black Fourth Ward and the deeply wealthy River Oaks. The Houston Police Department arrested seven black teenagers and young adults for the crime, many of them residents of the Green Pond area, where the luxury-oriented River Oaks Shopping Center strip mall and \$300,000 to \$400,000 townhomes now stand (see *Map 15*). The young black men apparently confessed to the crime, but eventually alleged that police forced those false confessions under duress. The brutality began immediately after the police arrested them. They noted that, before they were taken to the police station, the officers took them to the old shack where Billy Bodenheimer had been killed and placed them in the icebox where the boy had been found because they “wanted these niggers to see the ghost of that white boy.”⁵⁶

At least one postal service worker, a white man, hinted that the confessions might not be true, saying, “I just don’t see how that many Negroes could do anything in this neighborhood and not be seen.” Surely, he reasoned, everyone knew that black people did not casually stroll west of Taft Street and into the adjacent white community without being marked as out of place, especially on the traffic-heavy West Gray Street, where the attack occurred.⁵⁷ Additionally, skeptics pointed out that in recent weeks a white man who had been previously charged with attempted rape was suspected of actually raping a twelve-year-old boy in the neighborhood. Nearby, a young black girl had recently been found too,



Map 15 Green Pond was a small majority-black enclave nestled between the majority-white River Oaks and Montrose communities. The residents were disproportionately employed as domestic and service workers. Despite that they had resided in the area long before many of the surrounding white families, Green Pond residents were still recognizable as “out of place” when they traversed neighboring communities.

“raped, strangled, and bitten” in a park in similar condition to Bodenheimer. Moreover, just a few days prior, a twenty-five-year-old white man reportedly attempted to abduct two or three young white girls in the area.⁵⁸

Black Houstonians unfamiliar with the residents of Green Pond were unsure about the “‘yes-we-did, no-we-didn’t’ suspects,” but they nevertheless expressed contempt for the police investigation, noting that the Houston Police Department did not investigate, with any semblance of fervor, the murder of Mattie Louis Mitchell, a young black girl who had been killed only just over a month prior in similar circumstances.⁵⁹ For their part, the black residents around West Clay supported the young men’s revised testimonies. At least four of them went on the record claiming they saw the young men boxing in the yard of another teenager until “it was almost dark,” and thus could not have been responsible for the crime that occurred in daylight over a half mile away. Indeed, nearly thirty people were involved in or were spectators of the neighborhood boxing match and could corroborate their alibis. Confessing that she “positively saw the boys boxing,” Mrs. Frances Hollins believed “the boys are a victim of circumstance.” Additionally, Arthur Breitreux, a white man, assured police that he “positively saw” at least two of the young men boxing where they had testified.⁶⁰

Some white Houstonians expressed disbelief in the police department’s version of things, noting the ways the white residents of Montrose would have noticed roving black teenagers out of place. Indeed, about ninety percent of the census tract where Bodenheimer was killed was white. Nevertheless, many white Houstonians, predisposed toward believing black people were especially prone to criminality, remained convinced that the young men had committed the crime. Some anonymously promised the Bodenheimer family that the “niggers will get what’s coming to them.” They swore to bludgeon any black

people who crossed their paths to death with a baseball bat.⁶¹ This threat of violence was an ever-present cog in the machine of social control that determined where black people lived and could live, worked and could work, and play and did play.

While the majority of violent crimes in Houston were intra-racial, with over ninety-four percent of all homicide victims in Houston between 1958 and 1961 killed by someone of the same racial categorization, interracial crimes—especially when the alleged assailant was black and the victims were white—compelled many people to demand a hardening of the lines that divided black space from white space.⁶² Indeed, following Bodenheimer's murder and crimes like it, "segregationists" tended to demand "more segregation," and Americans in general demanded "stricter laws... and greater punishments." Doris Bodenheimer, Billy's mother, "strongly resent[ed]" these proposed solutions to alleged interracial violence, saying she opposed "condemn[ing] the whole Negro race because those boys have been accused." The *Informer* agreed, maintaining that these so-called solutions for interracial crime would only "salve consciences, themselves warped." And because they exacerbated rather than addressed the problems of concentrated poverty and racial segregation, these responses would always fail to "prevent recurrence" of crimes big and small.⁶³ Racial segregation, both the *Informer* and Bodenheimer repeatedly expressed, was intrinsically linked to the intergenerational impoverishment of entire communities, since it both denied poor black Houstonians equitable access to municipal resources and "confirmed" negative stereotypes against and legitimated bias toward black people as a group—a group whose environments were always bound up in white imaginaries with squalor and crime.

When white segregationists in Houston thought of black space, they didn't envision the impressive homes of doctors like J. B. Covington in Third Ward. They did not

acknowledge the economic vitality black entrepreneurs and workers provided for small business districts across the city. They did not see the resilience of black folks in the face of municipal neglect. Instead, they saw squalor, an excuse to turn black neighborhoods into toxic dumps. They saw muddy streets and homes that doubled as firetraps—excuses to demolish the “slums” to make way for white residential development and highway construction. They understood, consciously or not, black spaces as “racial-sexual frontiers,” justification for their heavy-handed containment. Even in the absence of official crime data, they saw criminal spaces, which justified police harassment and abuse. And throughout the 1950s black Houstonians witnessed the consequences of the criminalization of the spaces where they had been compelled to live. This “new type of segregation,” justified by “black criminality” and amenable to liberal individualism, would keep most black Houstonians segregated from the material and symbolic resources they would otherwise need to fulfill the vision of a color-rejecting future. And detrimentally, the reinforcing practices of racial stigmatization and spatial marginalization would overexpose black people to a discriminatory criminal justice system and limit their life chances.

Inadvertently, then, black Houstonians’ resignation to the Morris verdict and sentencing confirmed the Jim Crow court’s conclusion that he was indeed a criminal, as were other black people who were tried and found guilty like him. Cases like these only provided additional evidence to support the notion that black people were disproportionately responsible for crime in Houston and minimized black people’s very important and biting critiques of systemic discrimination. Though Morris’s case was an anomaly—most often people committed crimes near their homes, the places they shopped, and the places they played, and thus, in a segregated city, most often victimized people of

the same racial group—the verdict against him confirmed stereotypes about the entire racial group for those who were susceptible to believe them.

And while black writers addressed the issue of stereotyping all black people as criminals, they also contributed to a societal consensus that maintained the courts as the rightful arbiters of right and wrong and that demanded the “Negro community” shoulder responsibility for the actions of black people. Just like other Americans, black Houstonians believed committing a crime to be each individual’s choice, and demanded that criminals be tried and punished. However, the individualist epistemology they used to understand crime did not square well with their awareness of systemic discrimination in southern courts, nor was it congruent with a color-rejecting vision for criminal court procedures. Because of their ardent embrace of individualism, many black writers in the 1950s failed to consistently argue that crime was a structured response to social, political, and economic constraints, and therefore not best understood as individual moral failings. Black and white Americans, then, often both failed to critique the nation’s shortcomings when they contributed—some perhaps unwittingly so—to a discourse that failed to challenge the link Americans had constructed between blackness and criminality.

Black writers asked, for example, “Is it that Negroes prefer... vice and gambling to run rampant in the Negro community?” But they seldom inquired about the economic circumstances that might have compelled these activities, and even less often confronted the question about how “the segregation system” created “the Negro community” in the first place without also including some critique of individual morality. Instead, for example, the *Informer* highlighted that “too large a percentage of the lawlessness and crime with which all big cities are afflicted originated with Negroes.” The editorialists lamented that in 1952, according to the Houston Police Department, “63% of the murders committed in Houston

were committed by Negroes who comprise only 22% of the population.” The editorialists demanded that greater city resources be used to police and punish criminals in black communities.⁶⁴ They argued, again, that crime was a problem of individual failings, but managed, at the same time, to also reinscribe the collective “Negro community” as culpable in each black individual’s moral decay:

The stark fact is that there must be far too many Negroes without proper regard for the sanctity of human life, far too many without basic self control, far too many lacking in discipline and moral character. Neither judges nor police can be of much value in strengthening the moral fibre [sic] of a people. This must come from within.... The basic need of the Negro community of this city is a return to the moral values of another day, a turning away from the glitter of gaudy show and public acclaim of cheap characters who have bulgeoned their way to financial competence through operation and support of shady enterprise.⁶⁵

That discursive space, unique to the issue of criminality, provided an especially powerful opportunity for white folks to close ranks around free-market meritocracy and against race-conscious liberalism. That is, this confounded rendering of individual-as-group “Negro crime” was highly exploitable in a culture that valued individualism but that also believed in black inferiority. White Americans had long devised ways to impute the characteristic of criminality to blackness—for example, manufacturing criminal statistics that “proved” black people were prone to criminality by arresting them for and charging them with crimes at disproportionate rates. While they therefore did not *need* black Americans to voice similar concerns about “Negro crime,” then, white citizens in Texas and beyond used the words of black people and stereotypes of black criminality to justify discrimination against them.⁶⁶

Even as black Houstonians attempted to build toward a raceless future for their city, their white neighbors repeatedly demonstrated an ability to reconcile the tensions between their value in liberal individualism with their racialized understanding of crime. Those white Americans who were predisposed to believe that such a thing as “Negro crime” existed and was a menace saw criminality as related to blackness. Indeed, “black criminality had become

the most significant and durable signifier of black inferiority in white people's minds since the dawn of Jim Crow." Black leaders' espousal of individualism failed to effectively contest the association of blackness with criminality in white imaginaries. The criminal courts, then, were a critical site for the exploitation of the limits of black folks' color-rejecting vision, and certainly, those in Harris County demonstrated the ways in which courts, as white spaces, had learned to adapt to black folks' civil rights gains.

The alternative, however, is not necessarily that Morris's defense team could have argued a more convincing case if they had called out the stereotype of the "Negro criminal" or if they had been able to successfully argued that historical, systematic discrimination against black people as a group prevented Morris from receiving a fair trial. Perhaps white Houstonians would have refused to even engage such a defense. However, the impact of the verdict and black Houstonians' ultimate acceptance of it was similar to the consequences of the Scottsboro cases: the court maintained its legitimacy as the arbiter of morality and criminality, even as it openly refused to excise racial discrimination from its proceedings. Whether they accepted such outcomes because of the exigencies of living their own lives, because they believed in the legitimacy and therefore the finality of court decisions, or because they feared state violence—or any other number of reasons or combinations of theses—the impact was ultimately the same: a racially discriminatory system remained fundamentally unchallenged and a black man had been made into a criminal by a Jim Crow court and his life handed over to the state. The "new type of segregation" that Henry Allen Bullock warned black Houstonians could emerge followed the same syntax, using individualist rationales to explain white evasion and exploitation of black people and spaces. Indeed, racial segregation witnessed a net increase in the city over the remaining half of the twentieth century, the effects of which often manifested as crime among the most

vulnerable and economically exploited members of Houston's black communities. Racial and economic segregation, as Doris Bodenheimer poignantly argued, would inevitably yield results that would devastate families and communities. But young white children like Billy did not often bear that burden the most heavily; black Houstonians suffered that weight.⁶⁷

Notes

¹ Pavlicek's recounting is somewhat inconsistent. She claims to have seen a knife on the bus, but then claims that after she had de-boarded with her daughter she only ran to call the police once she saw the knife. Bessie Pavlicek, "Re: Stabbing of F.A. Nowak," October 11, 1951, Inquest Records (1889 – 1956) vol. 51, Harris County Archives. Also note several documents spell Morris' first name "Johnny." When directly quoting or citing from them I will use that spelling. However, outside of direct citations I will spell his first name as "Johnnie" because that is how he signed all of the official court documents.

² "TV Plea Brings Bus Killer Clue," *Houston Post*, October 12, 1951, 1.

³ "Davis to Seek Quick Morris Indictment," *Houston Post*, October 17, 1951, sec. 1, 7.

⁴ "State Asks for More Time in J. K. Morris' Case: Charge Veniremen Dismissed without Being Questioned," *Houston Informer*, December 15, 1951, sec. 1, 10 (quote).

⁵ "J. L. Morris' Trial Is Postponed: Wife Freed of 'Vag' Charge," *Houston Informer*, November 10, 1951, sec. 1, 10.

⁶ Melissa A. Sanders, "Equal Protection, Class Legislation, and Colorblindness," *Michigan Law Review* 96 (November 1997): 245–337. Political scientist and women's studies scholar Julie Novkov echoes Sanders's legal scholarship, arguing that the nation's courts have moved away from the intentions of Radical Republicans who had supported the Equal Protection Clause during Reconstruction. The clause was to ensure that group-based discrimination did not prevail in the years following the Civil War. Since then, however, courts have become concerned with individual, circumstantial evidence (or lack thereof) of discrimination. That is, rather than acknowledge the relationship of the state to groups of individuals both historically and contemporaneously, courts have come to recognize discrimination only against individual subjects. For example, under current jurisprudence the disproportionate incarceration and harsher sentencing of black people, therefore, cannot be used as evidence to request relief in a case of possible discrimination by a prosecutor. Thus, there was a remarkable shift from the logic in *Norris v. Alabama* to that in *McCleskey v. Kemp*. As a result, legal scholar Michelle Alexander notes, "The system of mass incarceration is now, for all practical purposes, thoroughly immunized from claims of racial bias." Julie Novkov, "Mobilizing Liberalism in Defense of Racism," *Good Society* 16, no. 1 (2007): 30–39, doi:10.1353/gso.0.0003; Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: New Press, 2012), 139. Also see Michael Kent Curtis, *No State Shall Abridge: The Fourteenth Amendment and the Bill of Rights* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1987), 197. Literature scholar Theron Britt remains convinced that the Supreme Court's anti-structuralist interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment, cemented by their rationale in *Brown v. Board* that Jim Crow schools were unsustainable because they denied the intangible rights of individual black students, has effectively encouraged conservative courts to firmly hold the line on the question of group versus individual relief in cases of racial discrimination. In 1984, William Bradford Reynolds, then the Assistant Attorney General of the Civil Rights Division articulated as much. Invoking the voice of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., he argued that "official colorblindness and equal opportunity for all individuals were not just legal commandments, but moral imperatives..." Reynolds was as conservative as the president who appointed him—Ronald Reagan—and received considerable pushback from liberal Democrats during

the nomination process. They accused him of “work[ing] against insuring the civil rights of black [people] and minorities,” and indeed, while working with the Justice Department, he had failed to file suit against eleven Mississippi counties that black citizens alleged had violated their voting rights. Theron Britt, “Law of the Intangible: Desegregation, Diversity, and the Individual,” *College Literature* 35, no. 3 (July 1, 2008): 142–57; William Bradford Reynolds, “Individualism vs. Group Rights: The Legacy of *Brown*,” *Yale Law Journal* 93, no. 6 (May 1, 1984): 998, doi:10.2307/796202; James D. Williams, ed., *The State of Black America: 1984* (New York: National Urban League, 1984), 194.

⁷ *Moore v. Dempsey*, 261 U.S. 86 (Supreme Court of the United States 1923); *Norris v. Alabama*, 294 U.S. 587 (Supreme Court of the United States 1935); Matthew Lippman, *Criminal Procedure* (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2013), 33. Megan Ming Francis explains that the *Moore* victory demonstrated to the NAACP that it could make important gains in civil rights by raising funds to defend cases at the level of state and local branches. The victory helped the organization to raise its profile and encouraged defendants to make “rights claims through the law.” Ming Francis does note, however, that the organization “would misstep egregiously in the near future—most famously in its disastrous handling of the Scottsboro cases” where their hesitant approach to the case allowed for the Communist party to become, for a moment, the face of civil rights litigation. Megan Ming Francis, *Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 127–63, 161–62 (quotes).

⁸ The Scottsboro trials have been studied for a variety of reasons beyond the legal significance of the court decisions. Communist involvement in the defense efforts for the young men forced the NAACP to move quickly toward helping black defendants in criminal trials where issues of racial discrimination were at stake—which was often. Both during the interwar period and in later scholarship, Communists were accused of using the Scottsboro teens as fodder in attempts to raise their own political profile. Hugh T. Murray Jr. argues that these depictions of the Communists are proposed without evidence of any ill-will on the part of Communists who had become involved in providing defense in the Scottsboro cases. Indeed, their efforts at propaganda brought their trial to the international stage, forced the NAACP to throw their resources and weight behind the defense, and possibly saved the teens from the death penalty. Hugh T. Murray Jr., “The NAACP versus the Communist Party: The Scottsboro Rape Cases, 1931–1932,” *Phylon* 28, no. 3 (September 1, 1967): 276–87, doi:10.2307/273666. Also see Dora Apel, “Scottsboro, the Communist Party, and the NAACP: Conflicts and Desires,” in *Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women, and the Mob* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004), 47–82; Dan T. Carter, *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969); Miller, *Remembering Scottsboro*; James A. Miller, Susan D. Pennybacker, and Eve Rosenhaft, “Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys, 1931–1934,” *American Historical Review* 106, no. 2 (2001): 387–430, doi:10.2307/2651612.

Scholars will also find interest in Haywood Patterson’s autobiography, penned with the help of journalist Earl Conrad. *Scottsboro Boy* is not a history of *Patterson v. Alabama* (1935) per se. Rather, it is Haywood Patterson’s story about the Alabama and federal justice system, prison and the production of criminals, and penal slavery.

Patterson’s narrative, related by Conrad, is not organized like most historical monographs. There are no topic sentences or thesis statements, only ruminations that appear at the end of lengthy stories. These ideas are presented as passageways into the mind of the protagonist, but they also function to infuse argument and social critique into a seamless chronological story. For example, at the end of the second part of the book, Haywood is to be removed from “Murderer’s Home”—the local name for Atmore State Farm Prison—to Kilby Prison, and notes, “I thought this should be a place to mete out punishment to certain convicts to show them they should not commit crime and bring them back to a normal understanding of life and a normal way of life in society. But this place makes criminals out of convicts. The main thing they learn here is murder.” Passages like these ring with presentist urgency throughout the book. The villain in the book is not the collective white body, nor is it Ruby Bates or Victoria Price, the two girls who had been a part of the conspiracy to have the Scottsboro Nine tried for rape. The jailers, prison guards, and “Uncle Toms” are not the villains either, though turncoat black people suffer a great deal in Patterson’s presentation. The repeated enemy of justice is the court system itself and its violent arm: the prisons as institutions. White men and black men, women, and the nation at large are intimidated to be held hostage to the structures that determine “how the Negro people have to live in the

South.” It is ultimately a tragic story about how the criminalization of black people—in this case, young black teenagers and men—creates criminals out of black bodies, even where no crime was committed. Haywood Patterson and Earl Conrad, *Scottsboro Boy* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1950), 183, 265–66.

⁹ Susan N. Herman, “Why the Court Loves *Batson*: Representation-Reinforcement, Colorblindness, and the Jury,” *Tulane Law Review* 67 (1993): 1807; Michael J. Klarman, “The Racial Origins of Modern Criminal Procedure,” *Michigan Law Review* 99, no. 7 (2000): (electronic); Pamela S. Karlan, “Race, Rights, and Remedies in Criminal Adjudication,” *Michigan Law Review* 96, no. 7 (1998): 2001–30; Carter, *Scottsboro*.

¹⁰ Carter, *Scottsboro*, 163.

¹¹ “TV Plea Brings Bus Killer Clue,” 1; “Witnesses Said Threatened in Fatal Stabbing,” *Big Spring Daily Herald*, November 18, 1951, 4. Both the *Houston Chronicle* and the *Houston Post* had track records of writing in ways that were favorable to the reputation of the city’s police. Indeed, the white-owned press frequently “failed... to formulate reasoned opinions based upon facts, rather than bias or class interest.” The use of television would help to further dramatize so-called black criminality over time. Milton Gabel and Hortense Gabel, “Texas Newspaper Opinion: II,” *Public Opinion Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1946): 201; Gabel and Gabel, “Texas Newspaper Opinion,” 1946; E. Bun Lee, *TSU Meets the Press: White Newspaper Coverage of a Black University in Houston, Texas, 1947-1987* (Houston: D. Armstrong Co. Inc., 1989); Steven M. Chermak, *Searching for a Demon: The Media Construction of the Militia Movement* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002); Robert M. Entman and Kimberly A. Gross, “Race to Judgment: Stereotyping Media and Criminal Defendants,” *Law and Contemporary Problems* 71, no. 4 (2008): 93–133.

¹² Cultivation theory maintains that overexposure to media images, whether real or fictional, affects the ways people see the world around them. People who are overexposed to newspaper and television stories about crime tend to believe that crime is more prevalent than it actually is. Because black people are often seen in situations of poverty and in stories about crime in media, consumers are likely to overestimate criminal activity among people marked as black. Mary Beth Oliver, “African American Men as ‘Criminal and Dangerous’: Implications of Media Portrayals of Crime on the ‘Criminalization’ of African American Men,” *Journal of African American Studies* 7, no. 2 (2003): 3–18.

¹³ “Indicted in Bus Killing,” *Houston Informer*, October 20, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 12; “The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Indictment,” October 17, 1951, Harris County District Clerk’s Office. Christia Adair remembered that Morris was originally arrested because “some Negro sheriff deputy told the high sheriff that he knew where a Negro was living with a white woman.” Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project. *Jet* magazine blamed Christine for her husband’s arrest, saying, as a white woman living with a black man, she “was the unwitting cause” of Morris’s initial detainment. “Husband of White Woman Gets Life for Murder,” *Jet*, January 3, 1952, 52. The deputies received some share of about \$1320 for Morris’ capture from the local bus driver’s union and the Houston Transit Company. See “Davis to Seek Quick Morris Indictment,” 7.

¹⁴ “Indicted in Bus Killing,” 1, 12.

¹⁵ Monte Akers, *Flames after Midnight: Murder, Vengeance, and the Desolation of a Texas Community, Revised Edition* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 146–47; James Martin SoRelle, “The Darker Side of ‘Heaven’: The Black Community in Houston, Texas, 1917-1945” (Ph.D. dissertation, Kent State University, 1980). Jennifer Lynn Ritterhouse discusses racial etiquette as “the power-relations process” through which Jim Crow was maintained through racial performativity in *Growing Up Jim Crow: How Black and White Southern Children Learned Race* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006), 6. The quotes attributed to Adair appear in Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project. The quote about Morris’s case attracting widespread attention appears in Sonny Wells, “Johnnie Lee Morris Takes A Bride,” *Houston Forward Times*, November 4, 1967, 3. The case did eventually lead to an appeal, which Adair was happy to note was one of the major successes of the Houston NAACP in 1951. Mrs. C.V. Adair, “Annual Report of Branch Activities,” February 21, 1952, Papers of the NAACP, Part 25: Branch Department Files, Series A: Regional Files and Special Reports, 1941-1955, Group II, Series C, ProQuest History Vault.

¹⁶ “It Is to Laugh,” *Houston Informer*, November 21, 1951, sec. 2, 2; “Indicted in Bus Killing,” 1, 12; “A Texas Court Sees A Light,” *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, 14.

¹⁷ On Lulu B. White, see Mary Ellen Curtin, "Strong People and Strong Leaders: African American Women and the Modern Black Freedom Struggle," in *The Practice of U.S. Women's History Narratives, Intersections, and Dialogues*, ed. S. J. Kleinberg, Eileen Boris, and Vicki Ruiz (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 316; and Merline Pitre's seminal *In Struggle Against Jim Crow*. "Houston Negroes to Back Accused," *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, October 21, 1951, 11 (Julius White quote); "Johnnie Lee Morris Defense Fund Interest Increases: For Morris A Fair Trial Is Goal," *Houston Informer*, October 27, 1951, 1, 10.

¹⁸ "Friends Honor Associate Justice Henry E. Doyle First Court of Appeals with a Retirement Celebration (Retirement Celebration Program)," n.d., Copy in author's possession.; "Galveston, Texas, Bar Group Admits Negro," *Jet*, February 21, 1952, 9; Herman Lee Ross v. State, 156 Tex. Crim. 164 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1950); Michael L. Gillette, "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (April 1978): 393–416. Ross was found guilty of murder on retrial and again sentenced to death. "Appeals Court Rejects Request Of Herman Ross," *Galveston Daily News*, March 13, 1952, 13.

On Durham see Thomas D. Russell, "'Keep Negroes out of Most Classes Where There Are a Large Number of Girls': The Unseen Power of the Ku Klux Klan and Standardized Testing at the University of Texas, 1899–1999," in *Law, Society, and History: Themes in the Legal Sociology and Legal History of Lawrence M. Friedman*, ed. Robert W. Gordon and Morton J. Horwitz (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 315; Kluger, *Simple Justice*; Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*; Laverne, *Before Brown*.

On Doyle see Virgie Lemond Mouton, "And So He Rose Alone: The Legacy of Judge Henry Elman Doyle, the First Graduate of Texas Southern University School of Law, Presently Known as Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law" (Texas State Historical Association 112th Annual Meeting, Corpus Christi, Texas, March 7, 2008); DeCarlous Spearman, "Henry Elman Doyle," in *African American National Biography*, ed. Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008); "Bond Hearing For J. L. Morris Is Set for November First: Grants Writ after D.A. Denies Bail," *Houston Informer*, November 3, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 12; "Defend Slayer of Bus Driver," *Jet*, November 22, 1951, 24.

Adjusted for inflation, the Consumer Price Index indicates that the sum raised for Morris's defense fund in those first two weeks would be over \$45,000 today. "CPI Inflation Calculator," Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed November 10, 2013, <http://data.bls.gov/>.

¹⁹ "Slavery by Default," *Houston Post*, January 28, 1950, 6; Mrs. William Dunn, "Why Did My Son Join The Communists?," *Houston Post (This Week Magazine Insert)*, June 6, 1954, 14–15, 32, 38; "What About US Communists?," *Houston Post*, July 16, 1950, sec. 5, 6; E. J. McClendon, "Two Meanings of 'Brotherhood,'" *Houston Post*, December 3, 1952, sec. 3, 6. On Minute Women and anti-Communism in Houston see: Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, 45; Carleton, *Red Scare*, 69, 129; Cory McCoy, "Texas vs. NAACP Records Found," *TylerPaper.com*, June 21, 2015, <http://www.tylerpaper.com/TP-News+Local/221070/texas-vs-naacp-records-found>; VBAP-TV (Television station: Fort Worth, Tex.), "[News Script: NAACP Ouster Suit Is Heard at Tyler]," n.d., UNT Digital Library, <http://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc306322/>. On the threat of association with communists to the NAACP and its reputation, see Jeff Woods, *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948–1968* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 16; Eric W. Rise, *The Martinsville Seven: Race, Rape, and Capital Punishment* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998), 53–69; "Along the N.A.A.C.P. Battlefield: Attorney General Cook," *The Crisis*, December 1955, 620–22. On the Minute Women, see Carleton, *Red Scare*, 123.

The NAACP did manage to remain in operation in Texas after Shepperd was replaced by Will Wilson. However, its activities were severely circumscribed. One prohibition was that the organization could no longer practice law in Texas, nor "encourag[e], instigat[e], or financ[e] lawsuits in which it does not have a direct interest." Its work was limited by Judge Otis T. Dunagan to charity and education. "Communist Infiltration of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People" (Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 3, 1957), NAACP Part 7 of 8, FBI Records: The Vault, <https://vault.fbi.gov/NAACP/>.

Adair was subpoenaed and appeared in court at Tyler, Texas, and was put on the stand for about five hours, all toward the end, as she understood it, to get her to admit there was a membership roll. In retrospect, Adair was amused at the total amount of time, energy, and effort Texas' elected officials

wasted on “things which just turned out to be a soap box opera.” Attorneys William J. Durham and U. Simpson Tate and witnesses like Adair helped to win the case for the Houston NAACP, and “after ten months,” Adair reported, “we were able to open our office and go back.” Adair noted that the entire ordeal negatively affected her mental well-being, so much so that when she returned to administration she couldn’t even count money. Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project.

²⁰ Despite Bolin’s protestations, however, the NAACP continued to oppose any perceived communist infiltration into or collaboration with the organization. Cheryl Greenberg, “The Southern Jewish Community and the Struggle for Civil Rights,” in *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict*, ed. V. P. Franklin et al. (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 153. On the failure of a race-only approach to civil rights, Black Caribbean journalist and activist Claudia Jones wrote that “only the Communist Party, as the vanguard of the working class, with its ultimate perspective of Socialism, can achieve for the Negro women—for the entire Negro people—the full equality and dignity of their stature in a Socialist society in which contributions to society are measured, not by national origin, or by color, but by a society in which men and women contribute according to ability, and ultimately under Communism receive according to their needs.” Claudia Jones, “An End to the Neglect of the Problem of the Negro Woman [Pamphlet]” June 1949, 19, box 2.325/L30, folder “Claudia Jones, ‘An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman,’” Black Texas Women’s Archive, 1860-1865, 1897-1994, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. For more on the NAACP and the threats to its reputation by the communist label see Walter F. Murphy, “The South Counterattacks: The Anti-NAACP Laws,” *Western Political Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (June 1959): 371–90. In the case of the Groveland Boys in Florida, tried from 1949-1951, the NAACP made explicit its desires to avoid any collaboration with the Civil Rights Congress. Raymond A. Mohl, “‘South of the South?’ Jews, Blacks, and the Civil Rights Movement in Miami, 1945-1960,” *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1999): 13. For a brilliantly executed look into the Groveland case, see Gilbert King, *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America* (New York: Harper, 2013); and for contemporary coverage of the case in Houston see “Judge Bars NAACP Lawyers from Defending Prisoner,” *Houston Informer*, December 15, 1951, sec. 1, 1.

²¹ “Judge Bars NAACP Lawyers from Defending Prisoner,” 1; P. G. F., “Notes on Recent Developments in the South,” *Political Affairs* 31 (May 5, 1952): 49 (sixth quote), 50 (fifth, seventh, and eighth quotes); Pettis Perry, “Certain Prime Aspects of the Negro Question,” *Political Affairs* 30 (October 10, 1951): 6–22, 11 and 17 (quotes).

The birth of Cold War America and the relentless politics of McCarthyism intersected with struggles against Jim Crow in ways that limited the liberal possibilities of civil rights activists and organizations that maintained the fundamental righteousness of American democracy. Loyalty to the nation was necessary for legitimacy, especially in post-WWII racial politics, and black folks who proposed racial equality and equal economic opportunity made sure to also assert their belief in “Americanism.” Robin D. G. Kelley also suggests that communist organizations did not capture the full imagination of working-class blacks because these organizations, particularly interracial trade unions, often failed to be inclusive and democratic, when “average black workers probably experienced greater participatory democracy in community- and neighborhood-based institutions.” Robin D. G. Kelley, “‘We Are Not What We Seem’: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South,” *Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (June 1, 1993): 83, doi:10.2307/2079698. The Supreme Court’s decision in *Dennis v. United States* (1951) made these types of qualifications all the more necessary in order to hedge against allegations of sedition. Ruling in favor of the constitutionality of the 1940 Alien Registration Act, more popularly known as the Smith Act, the Supreme Court decided that the eleven petitioners in *Dennis* did not have a First Amendment right to speech that “advocate[d] the overthrow or destruction of the Government of the United States by force or violence, to organize or help to organize any group which does so, or to conspire to do so.” On McCarthyism and the civil rights struggle, see Manning Marable, *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007); Hall, “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past.” For an example of black folk using “Americanism” as rhetoric promoting raceless democracy, see “Americanism in the Schools,” *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, 14.

In response to the communist message, NAACP head Roy Wilkins retorted, announcing to the nation

that, "The Communists thought that slogan and catchphrases could flatter, cajole, or browbeat [the Negro] into a cabal against his own country, but they reckoned without his record of loyalty running back to black Crispus Attucks shot down by the Redcoats on Boston Common." Indeed, Wilkins made clear that the "aims, aspirations, and loyalties" of black Americans were with the United States, imperfect as it was. "Says Reds Misjudge the Negro," *Houston Informer*, December 15, 1951, sec. 1, 1 (first and second quotes).

- ²² "Editorially Speaking: Trouble on the Bus," *Houston Informer*, October 27, 1951, sec. 2, 2. Historians have written a great deal about the importance of contesting segregation on public conveyances. As with the Caesars, black people on busses were not fighting for the right to be close to white people, but rather for the right to make and claim space for themselves. Blair Murphy Kelley, *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy v. Ferguson* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Herbert Shapiro, *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery* (Cambridge: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988).

The Communist Party of Texas singled out the "intense discrimination" that Mexican and black people in Texas "suffered," saying, "They are disenfranchised, discriminated against in employment and education, and subjected to unbelievable misery in lack of health and housing facilities." They, like all other Texans, needed to be protected "from the onslaught of the monopolies!" Communist Party of the United States of America, Texas State Committee, "Free Texas From Monopoly Control! Bring the New Deal to Texas! For Democracy, Security, Jobs, Peace!," 1938, <http://www.communistpartyhouston.org/apps/documents/>. In opposition to red-baiting tactics, members of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. maintained that the political party was undeniably American and dedicated to democracy. The "real foreign agents," general secretary of the CPUSA Eugene Davis wrote to U.S. Attorney General Thomas C. Clark, were "the big corporations who are the paymasters of the KKK, the Gerald K. Smiths, American Action, Inc., the lynchers, the anti-Semitic gangsters and the professional anti-Communists." Eugene Dennis to Thomas C. Clark, "McCarthy Era Freedom of Speech Bulletin (Eugene Dennis)," April 4, 1947, <http://www.communistpartyhouston.org/apps/documents/>.

- ²³ "NAACP to Bar Reds from Morris Defense Fund: Group Seek Dent and Foreman as Defense Lawyers," *Houston Informer*, October 20, 1951, 1, 12. Texas proved Adair's claim wrong, however, when the courts heard evidence against state's branch of the NAACP for subversive activity, which included allegations that some of the money raised for Morris's defense had been forwarded to the national organization to help build the organizational infrastructure for the Montgomery Bus Boycott as early as 1953. "The State of Texas vs. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, A Corporation, Et Al.: Oral Testimony, Vol. IV, Pages 871-1104," April 1957, Papers of the NAACP Legal Department Case Files Part 23, Reel 45, Group V, Series B, Box 144, Starting Frame 0709, ProQuest History Vault.

- ²⁴ "Editorially Speaking: Who Are The Enemies?," *Houston Informer*, May 23, 1953, 12; Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn: Loyalty," *Houston Informer*, October 17, 1953, 2.

- ²⁵ "Thanksgiving: An American Holiday," *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953, sec. 1, 12; "Americanism in the Schools," *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, 14.

- ²⁶ "Bond Hearing For J. L. Morris Is Set for November First: Grants Writ after D.A. Denies Bail," 1, 12; "Johnny Lee Morris vs. C.V. Kern: Writ of Habeas Corpus," October 31, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "Morris Bond Try Is Failure," *Houston Informer*, December 1, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 10; Ex parte Morris, 243 S.W.2d 852 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1951).

Meanwhile, Doyle posted a \$600 bond for the release of Mrs. Morris. Shortly after her release, the charge of miscegenation against the couple was no-billed by the Harris County Grand Jury. "J. L. Morris' Trial Is Postponed: Wife Freed of 'Vag' Charge," 1, 10.

- ²⁷ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Suppress Evidence and Purported Confession," December 10, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Hear Motion to Suppress Evidence and Purported Confession," December 10, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

- ²⁸ Morris's run-in with Baker, then, seemed to foreshadow the trajectory of his law enforcement career. Indeed, many black Houstonians grew to distrust black law enforcement officers through the 1950s and

1960s. At least one subject, interviewed by mayor's aide and social scientist Blair Justice, said that "Negro policemen have a poor image in the eyes of Negroes." Fifteen percent of black Houstonians who could identify the race of a police officer involved in a case of abuse against a black person said that the officer involved was black. When black officers harassed black citizens, black Houstonians noted that the officers were frequently "too rough" and "insulting." "Comments by Subjects Recorded by Interviewers," April 18, 1967, box 33, Louie Welch Papers, MSS 0051, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library; Center for Research in Social Change and Economic Development at Rice University, "[Confidential Report]," July 13, 1967, box 1, folder 3, Louie Welch Papers, MSS 0051, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

²⁹ "Motion to Suppress Evidence and Purported Confession"; "Deputy Outraged Over Fellow Officers' Conduct," *Houston Informer*, April 26, 1952, 1; *Harris County Sheriff's Department, 1837-2005* (Nashville: Turner Publishing Company, 2005), 14.

³⁰ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Quash Indictment #1," December 10, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office (all quotes); *Norris v. Alabama*, 294 U.S. 587 (1935); *Carter v. Texas*, 177 U.S. 442 (1900).

³¹ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: The State's Answer to the Defendants Motion to Quash Indictment," December 10, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

³² Indeed, American criminal justice systems have remained adept at "maintain[ing] the underrepresentation... of minorities on juries" through a variety of tactics, including racial tokenism. Discrimination in the jury selection, including the implicitly biased decisions of jury commissioners, the use of peremptory strikes, reliance on registered voter rolls to recruit jurors, and failures to locate highly mobile poor people contribute to an assemblage that has expressed no interest in diversifying its juries systematically. Hiroshi Fukurai, Edgar W. Butler, and Richard Krooth, *Race and the Jury: Racial Disenfranchisement and the Search for Justice*, 1993 edition (New York: Springer, 1993), v, 14-15. And, as Nathan Connolly describes was true in Miami, black middle class (sometimes self-appointed) leaders of black communities played a pivotal role in the maintenance of white supremacist institutions. These leaders often had plenty to lose economically if white people resorted to violence to exact "justice" on black communities. Some middle class and wealthy black people, then, had a vested interest in maintaining the kind of law and order that could pacify the more physically violent impulses of white supremacist culture. In Connolly's work, this included handing over a black Bahamian accused of assaulting white men's property—in this case, a white woman. In the case of Harris County Criminal Courts, this included true-billing indictments against black people like Johnnie Lee Morris, who, if he were a white man, would have the benefit of the doubt on his side before a grand jury. See Connolly, *A World More Concrete*, chap. 2.

³³ *Johnny Lee Morris v. State*, 158 Tex. Crim. 516 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1952); "October 1, 1934," *Houston Chronicle*, April 27, 2001, 1, <http://www.chron.com>; "He Was Exempted," *Daily News (Perth, Washington)*, June 15, 1938, City Final edition, 3; Allan Shivers to John J. Herrera, March 23, 1954, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History; crediting Houston Metropolitan Research Center at Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; Henry E. Doyle, *Johnnie Lee Morris, Petitioner, v. State of Texas: Petitioner's Brief*, 345 U.S. 951 (n.d.); John Ben Shepherd, *Brief in Opposition*, 345 U.S. 951 (n.d.).

For a study of the inherent biases in Texas's use of a key-man system for seating its grand juries, see Larry Karson, "Choosing Justice: The Implications of a Key-Man System for Selecting a Grand Jury" (Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice Conference, Houston, Texas, October 8, 2004).

³⁴ In *Norris v. Alabama*, no black person had been selected to serve on a grand jury in Jackson County in decades. The same was true in Harris County's *Smith v. Texas* (1940), when the Supreme Court found that the intentional and systematic exclusion of black citizens from juries was a violation of the defendant's Fourteenth Amendment rights. Herman, "Why the Court Loves Batson," 181 *Ill. L. J.* 9; *Smith v. Texas*, 311 U.S. 128 (Supreme Court of the United States 1940).

³⁵ "Houston Murder Trial Jury Being Selected," *Corpus Christi Times*, December 12, 1951, 18; Howard A. Carney, "Relating to Providing That in Capital Cases the State and the Defendant Shall Be Entitled to

Fifteen Peremptory Challenges; Providing That When Two or More Defendants Are Tried Together the State Shall Be Entitled to Eight Peremptory Challenges; Providing That in Capital Cases Where the Death Penalty Has Been Waived by the State's Attorney by Filing His Written Waiver Which Has Been Approved by the Court, the State and the Defendant Shall Be Entitled to the Number of Peremptory Challenges as Is Now Provided by Law in the Trial of Noncapital Felony Cases," 140 SB § (1951); "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Writ to Serve Copy of Special Venire," December 6, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "Special Venire in Capital Cases," *Texas Code of Criminal Procedure* Title 1, no. Chapter 34 (December 1, 1966); "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Quash Trial Jury," December 13, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

³⁶ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Quash Trial Jury." Spurgeon Bell's work in the case was particularly troubling for Carter Wesley and other black leaders. The white attorney sat on Texas Southern University for Negroes' Board of Regents and maintained an interest in black "uplift," but, for his critics, seemed far too willing to go the extra mile to get a conviction in Morris' case. "Negro Attys. Aply Defend Morris Here for 2 Courts," *Houston Informer*, December 15, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 10.

³⁷ *Smith v. Texas*, 311 U.S.; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Quash Trial Jury."

³⁸ "Def. Exhibit A," December 13, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

³⁹ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: State's Answer to Defts Motion to Quash the Trial Jury," December 13, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion to Quash Trial Jury."

⁴⁰ "Bus Slaying Witness Threatened," *Houston Chronicle*, October 12, 1951, 1 (first quote); "4 Men Who 'Look Like' City Bus Driver Slayer Sought," *Houston Chronicle*, October 14, 1951, sec. A, 12 (second through seventh quotes); "Witnesses Said Threatened in Fatal Stabbing," 4 (eighth and ninth quotes).

⁴¹ "It Is to Laugh," 2.

⁴² "D.A. Refuses to Cite Witnesses Threatened in J. L. Morris Case," *Houston Informer*, November 24, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 10.

⁴³ Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn: The Morris Case," *Houston Informer*, December 1, 1951, sec. 1, 2 (first through third quotes); "Man Says Morris' Case Cost Him Job," *Houston Informer*, November 21, 1951, sec. 1, 1; "D.A. Refuses to Cite Witnesses Threatened in J. L. Morris Case," 1, 10; "Editorially Speaking: Senseless Police Brutality," *Houston Informer*, December 8, 1951, sec. 2, 2 (fourth quote).

⁴⁴ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Defendant's First Application for Continuance," December 11, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Second Application for Continuance," December 13, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: State's Answer to Defts 2nd Application for Continuance," December 13, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Defendant's Amended Motion to Set aside the Verdict of the Jury and to Grant a New Trial," January 30, 1952, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

The defense team probably learned of Dickson through private investigators hired by the NAACP for whose services the organization paid nearly \$1000. "The State of Texas vs. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, A Corporation, Et Al.: Oral Testimony, Vol. IV, Pages 871-1104."

⁴⁵ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Charge of the Court," December 14, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Defendant's Exceptions and Objections to the Court's Main Charge and Instructions," December 14, 1951, Harris County District Clerk's Office.

⁴⁸ "Defendant's Amended Motion to Set aside the Verdict of the Jury and to Grant a New Trial"; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Defendant's Exceptions and Objections to the Court's Main Charge and Instructions"; "The State of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Charge of the Court."

⁴⁹ "Defendant's Amended Motion to Set aside the Verdict of the Jury and to Grant a New Trial"; "The State

of Texas vs. Johnny Lee Morris: Motion for a New Trial,” February 2, 1952, Harris County District Clerk’s Office.

⁵⁰ Morris eventually remarried a black woman named Christine Edwards, whom he met after his release on parole in Timpson, Texas. He remarked, “She has been the spark I needed to start anew. I think I’ll just make her mine for life.” It is unclear what happened to the former Christine Morris. Wells, “Johnnie Lee Morris Takes A Bride,” 3.

⁵¹ Morris v. State, 39 Tex. Cr. R. 371, No. 46 S.W. 253 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas June 27, 1953).

The NAACP often considered it a “win” if they could have a black defendant’s life spared in a murder case where the victim was white. For example, in 1924, in the case of black Houstonian Luther Collins, the Houston branch of the NAACP was able to get a reversal in the death penalty of Collins. He had been accused of criminal assault of a white woman. Discord among the jurors, fueled by doubt, resulted in a retrial in which Collins avoided the death penalty. This victory gave Collins’ supporters opportunities to continue the struggle to prove his innocence. By 1926, Collins’ supporters won him his freedom when the State decided there was not enough evidence for further litigation. “Luther Collins Case,” *The Crisis* 29, no. 2 (December 1924): 71; Steptoe, *Houston Bound*, 114–16; James Weldon Johnson, “The Luther Collins Case,” in *In Search of Democracy: The NAACP Writings of James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins (1920-1977)*, ed. Sondra Kathryn Wilson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 64.

In 1932, Charles Hamilton Houston and his student, Thurgood Marshall, achieved “victory” in the case of George Crawford, a black man charged with the murder of a white woman, by avoiding a death sentence and winning, instead, life imprisonment. This indicated “that there was reasonable doubt sufficient enough to save Crawford’s life.” Genna Rae McNeil, *Groundwork: Charles Hamilton Houston and the Struggle for Civil Rights* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 93 (quote); “Thurgood Marshall,” *Baltimore Afro-American*, February 20, 1999, sec. B, 2; Thurgood Marshall and Mark V. Tushnet, *Thurgood Marshall: His Speeches, Writings, Arguments, Opinions, and Reminiscences* (Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2001).

Also see the case of George Davis, another black man accused of attempted assault on a white woman in 1932. He, too, avoided the death penalty as a three-judge panel expressed doubts and concerns about the evidence in the trial and the conviction. “So twisted was the justice system when black men were accused of crimes against white women,” Sherrilyn Ifill writes, “that Davis’s sixteen-year sentence was perceived as a victory for the defense, and in a way it was.” Sherrilyn A. Ifill, *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the Twenty-First Century* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2007), E-book, chap 3. Also see José Felipe Anderson, “Freedom of Association, the Communist Party, and the Hollywood Ten: The Forgotten First Amendment Legacy of Charles Hamilton Houston,” *McGeorge Law Review* 40, no. 25 (2009): E-Journal; Arthur Weinberg and Lila Shaffer Weinberg, *Clarence Darrow, a Sentimental Rebel* (New York: Atheneum, 1987).

⁵² “Negro Bus Slayer Gets Life Sentence,” *Houston Chronicle*, December 15, 1951, 5; “Bond Hearing For J. L. Morris Is Set for November First: Grants Writ after D.A. Denies Bail,” 1; “J. L. Morris’ Trial Is Postponed: Wife Freed of ‘Vag’ Charge,” 1, 10; “NAACP to Bar Reds from Morris Defense Fund: Group Seek Dent and Foreman as Defense Lawyers,” 1. The grand jury’s intentionally decided not to indict Johnnie Lee Morris on the miscegenation charge. Likewise, Charles C. Castle, representing the district attorney’s office, “made a verbal request that the charges against Mrs. Morris be dismissed.” The grand jury ultimately no-billed both charges of miscegenation. Texas’s criminal courts had always been very lax in the enforcement of the state’s anti-miscegenation laws, and several cases across the state had failed to sustain convictions. Prosecutors in Houston had not tried a miscegenation case in almost thirty years, and had not won a conviction then. Davis may have considered following through on the charge, but the murder conviction against Johnnie Lee would suffice in allowing a white court to define black place. Moreover, like the black public, Davis probably wanted to avoid “agit[ing] the racial angle of Morris who is married to a white woman,” even while he successfully fomented white anxieties outside of the courtroom by spreading rumors about the threat of black violence against white witnesses. On anti-miscegenation laws and suits in Texas, see Charles F. Robinson, II, “Legislated Love in the Lone Star State: Texas and Miscegenation,” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 108, no. 1 (July 1, 2004): 65–87.

⁵³ “Ike Promises ‘Equal America’ In Policy Talk,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, October 16, 1952, A1; Ralph Bunche, “Dr. Bunche Expresses Faith in American Way,” *Los Angeles Sentinel*, June 22, 1950, A10; also see “Judge

Brosky Denounces Queries on Race, Color," *Pittsburgh Courier*, April 6, 1957, A2; "Juror Foresees Fair Trial For Accused Rapist," *The Chicago Defender*, December 29, 1951, 3; "Georgia Newspaper Warns Dixie of Lynch Evils: Urges Fair Trial for All Men in Order to Insure Safety," *Chicago Defender*, August 12, 1933, 2; "66 Per Cent of Whites Think U. S. Negroes Treated Fairly," *Pittsburgh Courier*, August 10, 1946, 28. Doyle quotes can be found in Mouton, "And So He Rose Alone."

⁵⁴ Ellsworth E. Rosen, "When a Negro Moves Next Door," *Saturday Evening Post*, April 4, 1959, 142.

⁵⁵ George E. Haynes, "Race Riots in Relation to Democracy," *The Survey: Social, Charitable, Civic: A Journal of Constructive Philanthropy* 142, no. 19 (August 9, 1919): 697–98 (all quotes).

⁵⁶ Keven McAlester, "The Icebox Revisited," *Houston Press*, March 11, 2004, <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/the-icebox-revisited-6586276>.

⁵⁷ "We're Innocent! Murder Suspects Weep; Refute Initial Statements," *Houston Informer*, July 25, 1959, 1, 10.

⁵⁸ McAlester, "The Icebox Revisited"; "Pleads Innocence, Texas Boy, 17, Gets Death," *Jet*, October 15, 1959, 46.

⁵⁹ "We're Innocent! Murder Suspects Weep; Refute Initial Statements," 10.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1, 10.

⁶¹ McAlester, "The Icebox Revisited." Responding to these stereotypes and the promise of violence against black Houstonians in response to her son's murder, Doris Bodenheimer, Billy's mother, wrote a public letter that the *Houston Informer* called "a masterpiece of human understanding that recommends itself to the minds and hearts of all mature Houstonians and Americans." Though she cautioned that she was not at all convinced that the seven black suspects were guilty, she foreshadowed what *Time* would later argue—that acts of violence were cries of despair, and that the nation had a duty, not merely to punish crime, but to "eradicat[e] the social circumstances" that "breed crime." Her son died, she reasoned, because of the "twin sickness of slums and segregation," which the *Informer* editors likened to "cancerous sores" within which "other crimes" could be nurtured and reproduced. Without "equal chance to develop with normal appetites, normal outlooks, and normal restraints," they reasoned impoverished Americans and black Americans—not always overlapping groups, but often intersecting nevertheless—were driven to crime out of desperation. "Murder Victim's Mother Points Out A Vital Truth," *Houston Informer*, August 8, 1959, 10; "White Mother Asks Tolerance In Son's Brutal Sex Slaying," *Jet*, August 20, 1959, 46–48.

⁶² Alex D. Pokorny, "A Comparison of Homicides in Two Cities," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 56, no. 4 (December 1965): 484.

⁶³ "Murder Victim's Mother Points Out A Vital Truth," 10.

⁶⁴ "Whose Fault Is It?," *Houston Informer*, September 30, 1950, sec. 2, 13; "Negro Crime," 2.

⁶⁵ "Negro Crime," 2.

⁶⁶ "Defaming A Race," 4; Edna Belle Evans, "Our Reader's Write: Negro Mother Cites Cause for Anti-Segregation Stand," *Houston Informer*, March 10, 1956, sec. 1, 1, 10; "Negro Mother's OK On Segregation Is Challenged," *Houston Informer*, February 25, 1956, sec. 1, 1, 10; Davis Lee, "New Jersey Negro Editor Warns His Race of the Dangers of the Integrated Schools in the South," n.d., Federal Segregation Court Dec. #1 June 1, 1954, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission; Patrick Warren Mernagh and Deane Settoon Mernagh, "Mammy Liza's Appeal to Her People (On the Question of Integration in Southern Schools)," 1954, Federal Segregation Court Dec. #1 June 1, 1954, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

⁶⁷ Lassiter, *The Silent Majority*, 2; Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, 3. Pamela S. Karlan argues that the Scottsboro cases and related criminal appeals reveal how the Supreme Court relented to the fact that racial discrimination would exist in the nation's courts, and that the best the justices could imagine was a trial procedure that did not make that discrimination totally apparent on its face. Michael J. Klarman notes that the *Norris* case did not yield greater protection for black Americans, that southern courts had already been working to systematize

their own definition of “fairness” prior to federal intervention, and that regardless of the *Norris* decision or the increasing standardization of practice in the nation’s lower courts, because of their economic vulnerability, many black Americans simply could not afford a trial that was truly fair. Karlan, “Race, Rights, and Remedies in Criminal Adjudication”; Klarman, “The Racial Origins of Modern Criminal Procedure.”

CHAPTER 5: CRIMINALIZED SPACE

Sociologist Walter R. Chivers published an examination of “the Negro delinquent” in 1942 where he explored the “social pressures and their attendant agents” that acted as “the sculptors who chisel out” the young criminal. He began by arguing that black Americans did not constitute a “racial group” by sociological or anthropological definitions.” Instead, they were a “conflict group” that “act[s] as if they are a race because of the circumstances” of their historical lineage and contemporary circumstances, namely slavery and racial discrimination. Those conditions, he argued, overexposed black people to poverty, for while not all black people were poor, given the “prevailing concepts of the ‘Negro’s place’” in American society, they were forced to live in or adjacent to economic poverty, both in the physical world and symbolically. As in Houston, Chivers noted that in New York, Memphis, Chicago, and Atlanta, the spaces where black people lived were defined by disproportionately high “unemployment [and] underemployment” as well as “exorbitant rents, inadequate housing, police brutality, economic exploitation, poor schools, indifference of political administrators, discrimination, and segregation.” All of these, in fact, were forms of economic exploitation that primed black youth to engage in activities defined as “crime” in order to escape the “fatalism” and “economic despair” that dared to snuff out their chances to make better lives for themselves.¹ Thus, impoverished black neighborhoods suffered overexposure to certain types of crime, specifically theft and violent crime. And while all black neighborhoods and different spaces within black neighborhoods did not witness high rates of criminal activity, because of the popular association of blackness with criminality, all black neighborhoods suffered the same stigmas and their consequences.²

How exactly did crime limit the life chances of black Houstonians in segregated communities? How were these limits constrained further by vectors of gender and sexuality? A data set that compiles all of the crimes reported in the Saturday edition of the *Houston Informer* from 1950 through 1959, as well as a sample of crimes from the *Houston Post* for the same decade, allows for a visualization of when, where, and what types of crimes were reported in the newspapers. Far more useful than city-level statistics on crime, this data set comprises of vignettes of people's lived experiences, and a snapshot of how Houston was constructed spatially and racially within the popular press. The *Informer* tended to focus on crimes in black neighborhoods, where black people were most often perpetrators and victims. The *Post* reported crimes that were committed by white Houstonians and that victimized white people with much more frequency. When mapped, these data points illustrate that criminal activity could occur anywhere in the city and be perpetrated by people from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. However, because of the ways the press functioned as a public space, the stories consistently suggested that crime was an effect of blackness, and the *Informer* in particular, and ironically, contributed to the discursive mapping of black neighborhoods as dangerous spaces.

In addition to providing evidence for the ways crime limited the life chances of segregated black Houstonians, the sources—newspapers—are also a site of inquiry. Newspapers played a significant role in the ways readers understood their local spaces in relation to multiple scales of society, from the neighborhood to the city, from the state to the nation.³ The final question, then, is what social geography of Houston did the press produce and how did Houstonians, lay people and in city government, respond? Newspaper reports were inherently selective and often sensational, curated for mass consumption. When they reported crime, the frequencies of types of crimes reported did not correlate

with official crime data. Official crime statistics offered a picture of a far less dangerous Houston than the newspapers' pages suggested. Moreover, the *Post* noted the racial identity of crimes when committed by black people, but did not practice the same racial marking when white people committed crimes. Together, both the *Informer* and the *Post* suggested a reign of terror in black neighborhoods, with little attention to the ways that crime was not structured around neighborhoods or census tracts, per se, but rather around commercial and recreational drags. In doing all of these things, the newspapers contributed to a criminalization of black space.

Therefore, mirroring what other historians have found in cities like Chicago and Baltimore, white residents of Houston “expected to see moral decay in the African-American community, undertook policies that forced vice activities into African-American neighborhoods, and then saw prostitutes, numbers runners, and petty criminals there, which confirmed their belief in the moral shortcomings of African Americans.” Criminalized space and the people therein were viewed as unredeemable, and thus the folks who endured elevated conditions of crime were themselves marked as criminal and isolated from the symbolic and material resources needed to protect them from violence. Houstonians variably responded to the issues in black neighborhoods with neglect, contempt, and police brutality rather than police protection, further exacerbating the racial and gendered consequences of segregation on black Houstonians.⁴

The social delimiters of gender and sexuality exposed black women—including those who were not what are called “ciswomen” today—to increased geographies of risk. Most scholars who study violence against black women focus on the ways domestic labor in white homes or exposure to authoritarian police placed black women at risk of physical and sexual assault. This was certainly true. However, some black women were not even safe in

their own homes. Without proper police protection or municipal resources, black women who suffered and survived intimate partner violence were least likely to be recognized as “true victims” in a misogynistic society that was already suffused with justifications for masculinist violence against women. Black men were viewed as particularly brutal, despite that neighborhood and economic distress explain statistical differences in the so-called racial disparity in rates of domestic assault.⁵ Black women in Houston, however, endured increased risk of suffering the consequences of racial segregation, economic exploitation, and ubiquitous misogyny, with few opportunities for relief in a criminal justice landscape that habitually undervalued black lives.⁶

“Black spaces” were first imagined and maintained by white people with the means to define where black people would live and where they could not. But these spaces were not merely where black people lived; negative neighborhood conditions, resulting from segregation, limited black people’s life chances. As was true in cities around the country, white residents in Houston who were already more inclined to generalize about black people than to see black people as individuals believed “poverty and crime were not simply violence, but ‘Negro crime’ and ‘Negro poverty,’” which were defining features of the black “race.” Thus, urban “white” newspapers, when they did focus on black life in the nation, often privileged “crime [as] by far the most important single category of Negro news...” Such was the case in the *Post* during the 1950s, where most stories about black people involved crime, and where, after the gruesome rape and murder of Billy Bodenheimer, the editors participated in the condemnation of the accused black youths by presenting the police narrative as the authoritative truth on the matter. The fear of “Negro criminality” often compelled the

phenomenon of residential white flight, while it simultaneously attracted white people to black neighborhoods for illicit recreation.⁷ As Gunnar Myrdal recorded:

Partly because Negro neighborhoods are slum areas and partly because Negroes are supposed to be masters of sensuous pleasure, Negro neighborhoods are frequented by whites who wish to do something illicit or immoral. White criminal gangs in Northern cities often have their headquarters in Negro neighborhoods. White men come to Negro neighborhoods to find both white and Negro prostitutes.... All sorts of tastes, including those which are regarded as immoral and perverted, are catered to in Negro sections. Illegal selling of narcotics is much simpler in Negro neighborhoods. The owners of these enterprises are practically all whites, although the 'entertainers' and subordinates are often Negroes.⁸

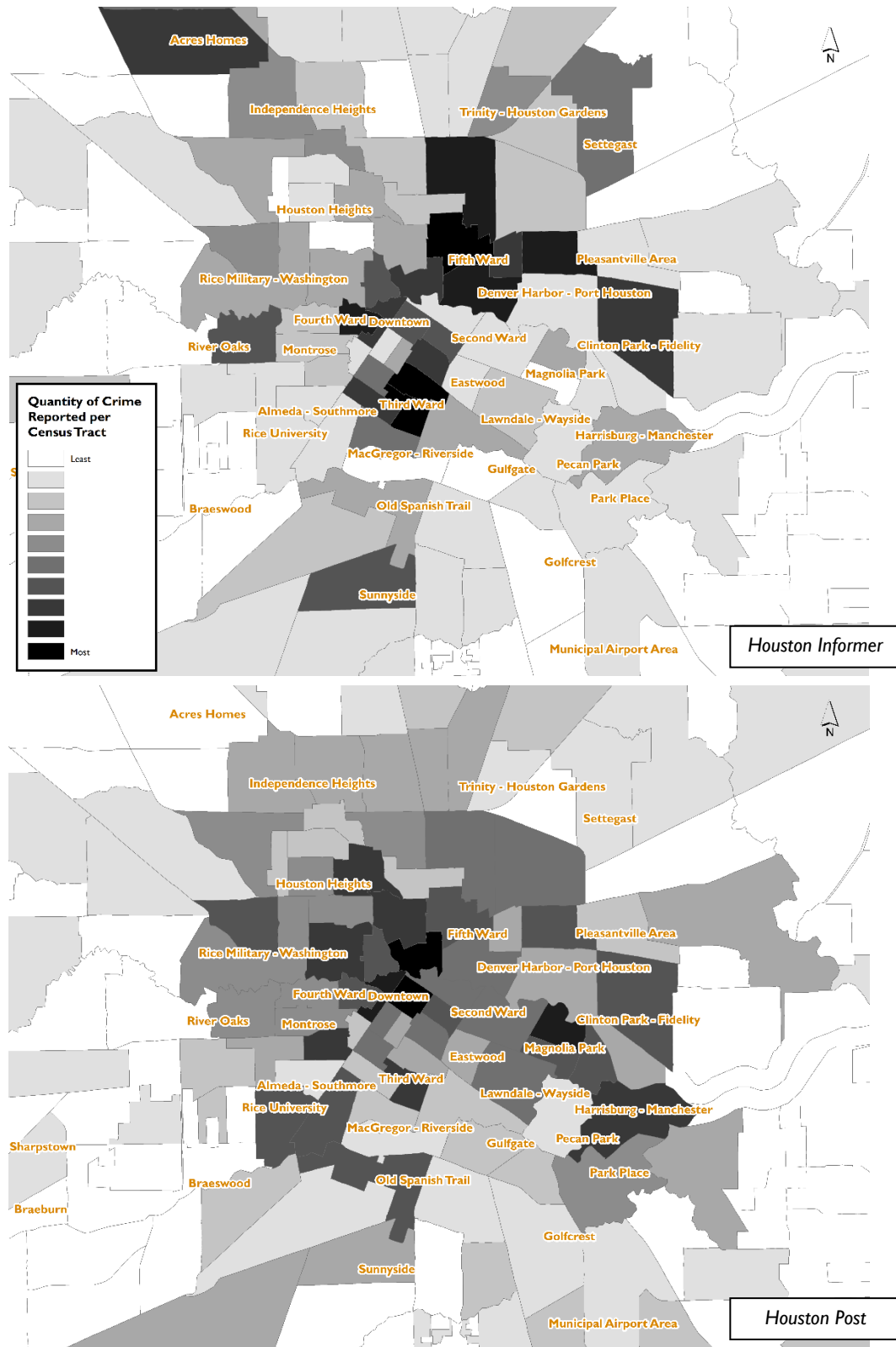
White Americans in the middle of the twentieth century were simultaneously fleeing and fueling crime in black neighborhoods, confirming for themselves the dangers and potential pleasures of "Negro criminality."

As spaces became defined as "black" in white imaginaries, then, they also inevitably became criminal spaces, both because white people's actions toward these spaces precipitated concentrations of material deprivation therein *and* transformed black spaces into marketplaces for white consumers of various "vices." For the former, while poverty did not necessarily have to translate to higher rates of crime, it did signal a lack of access to resources. Among those missing resources was protection by (and from) police officers, who had a long history of arresting and harassing economically impoverished Americans at higher rates than wealthier ones, thus inflating crime and arrest statistics among those under-protected populations.⁹ One of sociologist Rose Helper's respondents in her study on real estate brokers' practices in Chicago revealed the attitudes of white folks that encouraged these police actions:

There are very fine Negroes, but there is a tough element that follows them. If a neighborhood is white, and a Negro walks down the street, you have the right to question him on what he is doing there. But, if Negroes are living there, you can't distinguish between an owner and a prowler. White people don't want their women raped, their houses broken into, their cars stolen.¹⁰

These same beliefs motivated white flight from Riverside Terrace when the Caesars moved in. As one former resident reported, the Caesars, however genteel they were, represented an inevitable threat: the arrival of the “undesirable element” into Riverside. As another of Helper’s informants noted, “Most colored people look dangerous. They scare you when you look at them. They scare you when you’re not used to them. Even to me they look dangerous at times, just to look at them, and I’m used to them.”¹¹ Thus, whether they had committed crimes or not, and despite their intentions, black people could rarely occupy spaces without making those spaces dangerous, at least as far as white imaginaries were concerned. These associations of blackness with danger also persisted despite whether the white observer viewed themselves as progressive on the issue of race relations.

These imaginaries were produced and reproduced in Houston’s media publications. The *Post* and the *Informer* told different stories about crime in Houston. There was little overlap in the stories each paper reported, and, when visualized spatially, the two newspapers produce dissimilar maps of crime in the city (see *Map 16*). In the *Informer*, crime only appears to happen in great quantities in black neighborhoods. However, in the *Post*, crime is much more widely dispersed, though the spatial pattern points to a focus on crimes near the city’s core and less attention to outlying areas. In terms of the types of crimes reported, the *Informer* and the *Post* had minimal differences. Neither reflected the Houston Police Department’s (HPD) official tabulation of crime occurrences for the decade (see *Figure 2*). While homicides and other forms of murder accounted for less than 1 percent of all crimes in the city for the decade, they accounted for about 17 percent of crime coverage in both newspapers. The same was true of recorded sexual assaults, where they comprised only one-tenth of a percentage of crimes tabulated by HPD, but nearly 6 percent of the stories covered by the newspapers. The vast majority of crimes in the city were property



Map 16 Comparison of the quantity of crimes reported per Census tract in the *Informer* and the *Post*.

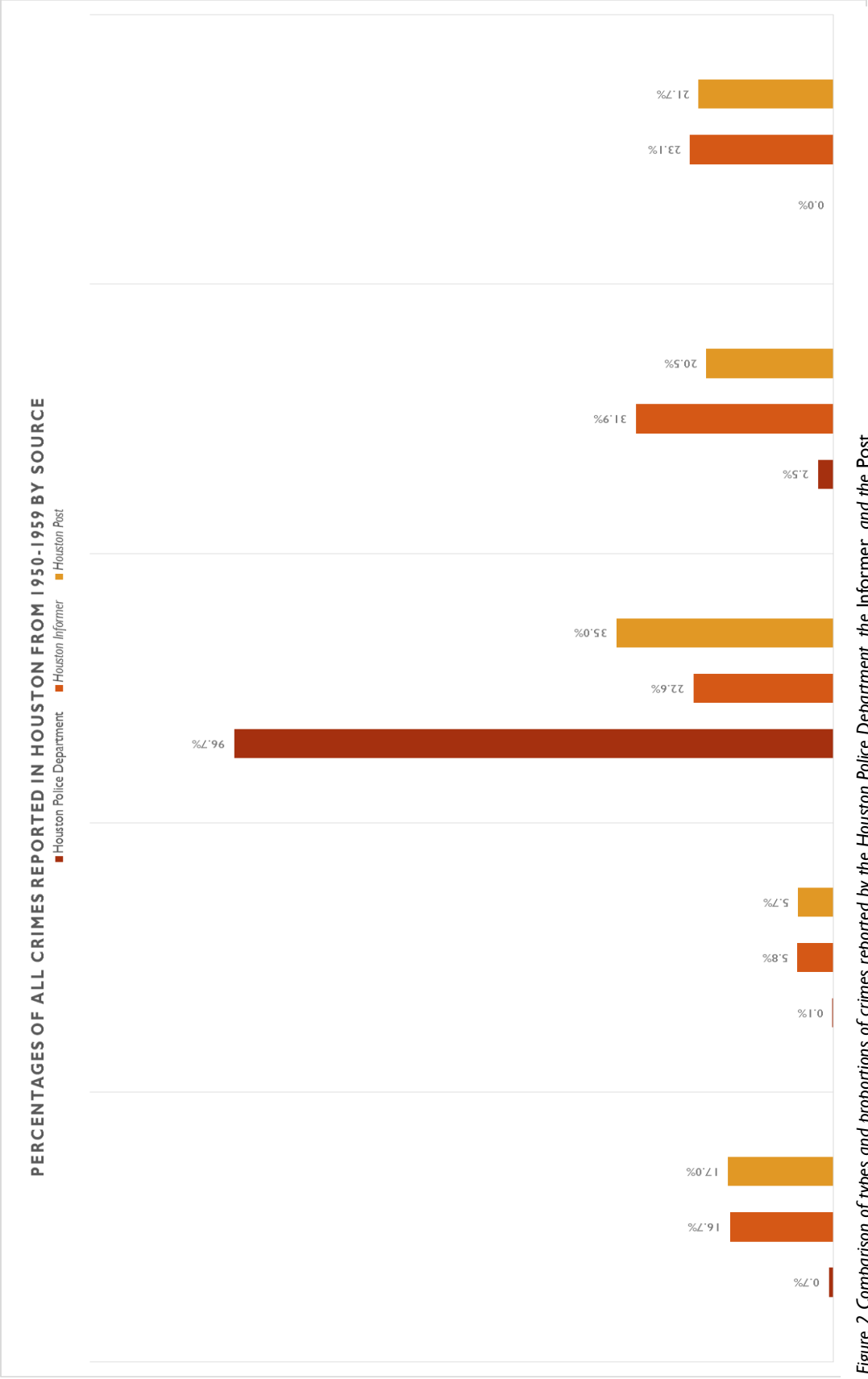


Figure 2 Comparison of types and proportions of crimes reported by the Houston Police Department, the Informer, and the Post.

crimes (96.7 percent), which in the newspapers included thefts, burglaries, vandalism, and breaking and entering. These received somewhat more attention in the *Post* (35 percent) than the *Informer* (22.6 percent). Crimes that involved non-fatal, non-sexual assaults were also relatively infrequent according to HPD, comprising less than 3 percent of their figures. However, in the *Informer* they accounted for nearly 32 percent of reported crimes, and in the *Post* nearly 21 percent. Other types of crime not included in HPD's measures, such as non-violent offenses like drug possession or trafficking, gambling, driving under the influence of alcohol, vagrancy, and possession of firearms figured significantly in newspaper coverage accounting for about one-fifth of the total crimes reported in both publications. In sum, the newspapers nearly mirror each other in the proportion of types of crimes reported. They differed in their attention to property crimes versus non-fatal, non-sexual physical assaults, with the *Post* giving greater attention to assaults on property. These differences in attention may have reflected the ways whiteness and property ownership were co-constructed in the postwar period. The *Informer's* overrepresentation of physical assaults suggested both higher rates of assaults in those areas of the city with higher and denser rates of unemployment, as well as lesser degrees of privacy and home ownership, as many of these assaults took place in public spaces or in rental units where neighbors might observe them and call for help.

Whereas the newspapers reported types of crime in similar proportions, the *Post* tended to tell stories where white people were victimized and the *Informer* focused on incidences involving black victims. The *Informer's* local reporting predominately covered black neighborhoods. Therefore, the overwhelming majority (96.3 percent) of victims of all crimes reported in the *Informer* whose racial categorization could be determined were identifiable as black. The *Post*, meanwhile, reported crimes in which 80 percent of the victims were identifiable as white (Table 2).

Group	<i>Informer</i>		<i>Post</i>		Total
Black	1663	96.3%	90	12.3%	1753
White	51	3.0%	587	80.1%	638
Spanish surname	9	0.5%	47	6.4%	56
Asian	4	0.2%	9	1.2%	13

Table 2 Victims of all crimes by racialized group, by newspaper

While both papers reported on crimes in about the same number of neighborhoods (the *Informer* covered sixty neighborhoods while the sample from the *Post* covered fifty-nine), they differed somewhat on which neighborhoods received the greatest attention (see Table 3). The *Informer* covered Houston's largest black neighborhoods closest to the city's core more often than did the *Post*, which focused its coverage geographically on the center of the city and in areas with higher proportions of white residents adjacent to majority black neighborhoods. The Fifth Ward bucked this trend, ranking first and second in the *Informer* and *Post*, respectively, for number of crime stories covered in the newspapers. This probably reflects Fifth Ward's proximity to downtown, its significantly higher population count than its rival counterpart (the two main census tracts in Fifth Ward had nearly 35,000 residents, whereas those in Third Ward had a little over 27,000 residents in 1960), and, likely, its higher rates of crime compared to other areas of the city. However, the *Post* did remain consistent in its racialized pattern of story coverage even in Fifth Ward, where the largest plurality of crimes it reported on were committed by people identifiable as white (46 percent).¹²

But while Table 3 may suggest entire neighborhoods or census tracts experienced higher rates of crime throughout, the reality was that most crime tended to be concentrated on main drags with commercial establishments that attracted people for shopping, drinking, and dancing. Almost 54 percent of the assaults reported in the *Informer* occurred on fewer than 70 streets out of a possible 718 streets where any assaults were

20 Neighborhoods with Highest Counts of Crime Reported, by Newspaper				
Rank	Informer	Crime reports	Post	Crime reports
1.	Fifth Ward	634	Downtown	266
2.	Third Ward	525	Fifth Ward	102
3.	Downtown	252	Washington Avenue - Memorial Park	98
4.	Fourth Ward	180	Magnolia Park	89
5.	Acres Homes	139	Heights	79
6.	Washington Avenue - Memorial Park	93	Near Northside	65
7.	Sunnyside	64	Midtown	62
8.	Independence Heights	56	Third Ward	58
9.	Trinity - Houston Gardens	51	Fourth Ward	47
10.	Near Northside	45	Second Ward	47
11.	Clinton Park Tri-Community	37	Montrose	44
12.	Heights	33	Denver Harbor - Port Houston	40
13.	Magnolia Park	21	Lawndale - Wayside	32
14.	Eastwood	17	Eastex - Jensen Area	29
15.	Harrisburg - Manchester	17	Independence Heights	29
16.	Eastex - Jensen Area	16	Macgregor	28
17.	Macgregor	15	Southampton Area	27
18.	Midtown	15	Golfcrest - Bellfort - Reveille	23
19.	Pleasantville Area	14	Greater Eastwood	21
20.	Settegast	14	Almeda - Southmore	20

Table 3 Twenty neighborhoods with Highest Counts of Crime Reported, by Newspaper. Bolded neighborhoods are those that did not make the top 20 in the other newspaper.

reported. These streets (e.g., Dowling Street, Lyons Avenue, West Dallas Avenue, Jensen Drive, and Liberty Road) were main drags, clustered with dining and nightlife establishments that served black Houstonians. While physical assaults reported in the *Post* also tended to occur on main drags with commercial establishments, the top reported streets in that newspaper were mostly in downtown (e.g., Main Street, Franklin Street, Texas Avenue, and Fannin Street). A few reflected the main drags in other areas of the city (Harrisburg Boulevard in Harrisburg and Navigation Boulevard in Second Ward). That is, while at the neighborhood level places like downtown, Third Ward, and Fifth Ward may have seemed

wholly crime-ridden, street-level analyses reveals that crime clustered on particular streets rather than across the breadth of neighborhoods, and that the kinds of streets they occurred on did not vary by the racial make-up of the neighborhood. Nevertheless, entire areas could become defined by the kinds of mental images shaped by newspaper stories, producing for black neighborhoods such cultural markers as Fifth Ward's nickname, "the Bloody Fifth."¹³

Aside from which racial groups received the most attention, one of the most significant differences between the two papers was where within the paper the stories were most often published. The *Post* was a daily published by the highly influential Hobby family. It sought to appeal to the professional and business classes both within Houston and around the nation. Its journalism, then, was less provincial than the *Informer's*, which reported on national and international events with less frequency—usually received from the National Negro Press Association. Instead, the *Informer* dedicated most of its ink to events in Houston and cities close to home, namely Dallas, San Antonio, and Galveston. Thus, the *Informer's* appeal would have been limited, to a significant degree, to a Texas-based readership and a mostly black audience. And as a bi-weekly, it had to compel readers to consider its news, however old or fresh, worthwhile. Thus, to attract readers and subscribers, the *Informer* not only reported more crimes per issue than the *Post* did, it also gave them greater prominence and sensational headlines (see *Figure 3*). The vast majority of crimes reported in the *Informer* appeared on either of its most visible pages—the first or last pages (in some issues the last page was 20, in others it was 24). These accounted for nearly 74 percent of all reports. Another 9 percent appeared on page 10, often the final page of the *Informer's* first section and the page on which the majority of the front page stories would conclude. While the first page of the *Post* covered 275 crime stories—the

largest count of any of the *Post*'s pages—these composed less than 20 percent of the total crimes reported in the paper. That is, the *Informer* privileged crime reports, but the *Post* exhibited no such marketing preference through crime stories as regularly.

Consequently, the *Informer* acted as a public space in ways that the *Post* did not in the middle of the twentieth century. It was a location where black people could read about and discuss their lives in their neighborhoods. This included stories about the cultural vibrancy of black communities: activities at local churches, productions at schools, sporting events at Texas Southern University, civic club gatherings, neighborhood beautification projects, and local and national politics. But the *Informer*'s decision to privilege stories of crime, while tucking these less sensational stories in the paper's internal pages, could have the effect of heightening the sense that black neighborhoods were best defined by the dangers they presented rather than the resilience under economic exploitation and residential segregation that the other stories represented. As criminal justice scholar Derek J. Paulsen explained, newspapers, given their prominence as a source of information in the middle of the century, probably had "the single greatest impact on public perceptions and fear of crime." He argued that the "skewed public perceptions" produced by journalism, incongruous with actual rates of crime, would be reflected in the attitudes and actions of those exposed to the newspaper. Readers and passersby who took note of the "black" newspaper's cover stories probably learned to "avoid traveling to certain areas... in Houston" and likely believed black people were simply prone to commit the most heinous types of crime. In its defense, the *Informer* hinted, at least once, that its intention in publicizing these stories was not merely to gain readership, but also to impress upon people that "Negro life in Houston is cheap." That is, they wanted their stories to convince black Houstonians to stress upon each other the value of black life, and they wanted to compel

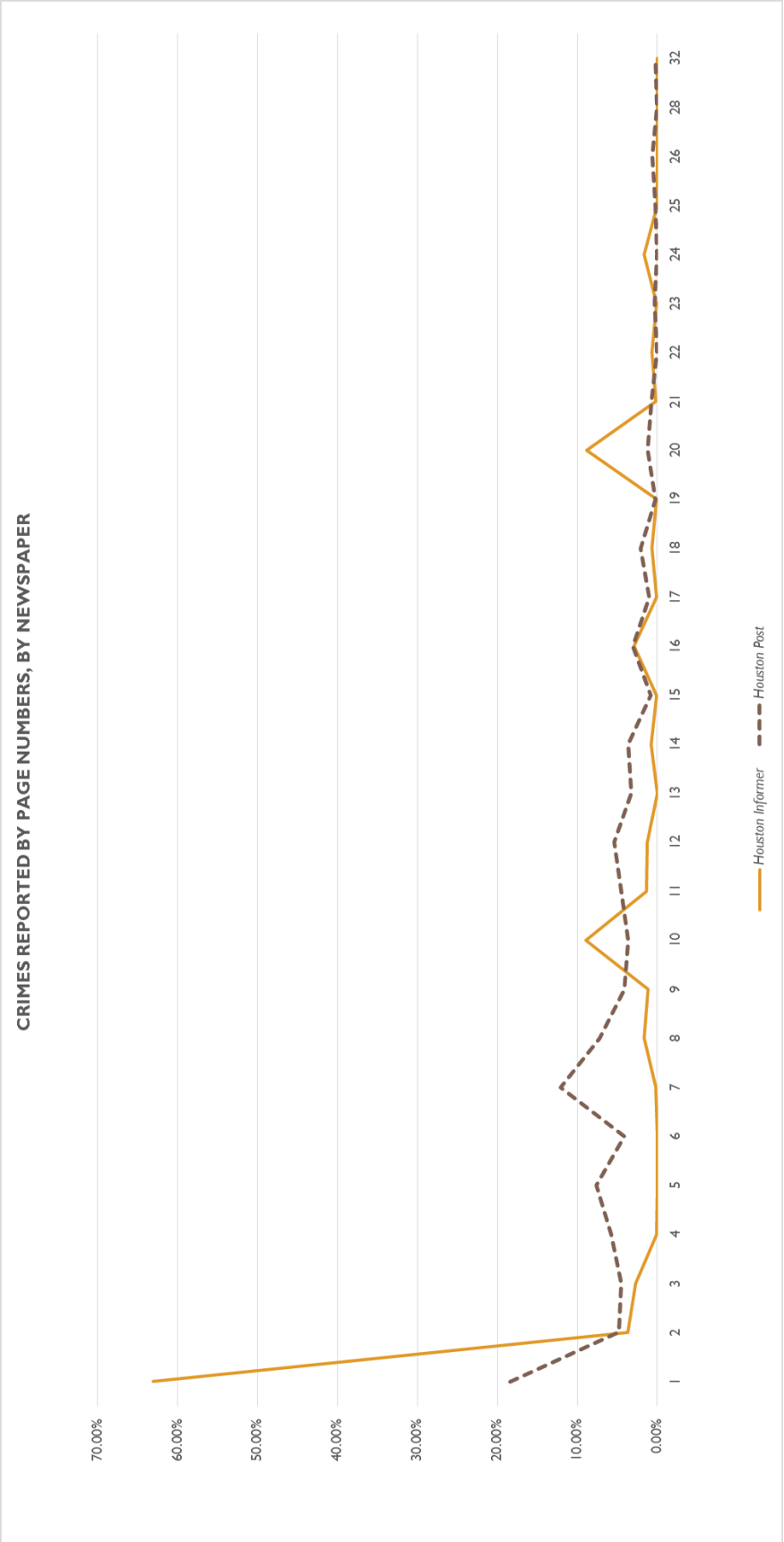


Figure 3 Crimes reported by page numbers, by newspaper

the Houston Police Department to investigate and “punish” criminals who targeted black people. The noblest of intentions notwithstanding, the overrepresentation of sensational crimes and the use of labels like “Bloody Fifth” and “Pearl Harbor” to describe black neighborhoods contributed to public perceptions of black neighborhoods as criminal spaces or abandoned warzones. Meanwhile stories in the *Post* and the *Chronicle* that highlighted “Negro criminals” while never noting “white criminals” certainly contributed to Houstonians’ sense of the racialized criminal geography of their city.¹⁴

But it was the *Informer* that publicized the most and the most often about “Negro crime,” and in doing so, trafficked in what historian Barbara Fields and sociologist Karen Fields call “racecraft.” One of the consequences of this persistent, if unwitting practice of “writing race into crime” was to provide documentary justification for the abuse black Houstonians suffered at the hands of police officers, white and black, who terrorized their communities with impunity, although this practice itself should be understood as a consequence of the racial stigmatization and spatial marginalization imposed on black people by white people in the first place. Certainly, readers thought police violence was necessary for maintaining order in the city.¹⁵

Indeed, contemporaries believed that black Houstonians committed more crimes than their white counterparts in the middle of the twentieth century. In 1938 Houston’s Acting Chief of Police Dave G. Turner’s first words to investigators working with Gunnar Myrdal were: “Well, niggers commit more crime than white people.” These beliefs prevailed in the following decades. In the 1950s, the *Informer* castigated black families and churches for failing to dutifully instill black children with the moral fortitude to resist the “glitter of gaudy show” of “the successful racketeer, the money-made preacher, the unprincipled teacher, [and] the successful scoundrel” who demonstrated alternatives to the kind of respectable

hard work middle class black folk believed was necessary for uplift. In 1960, Mayor Lewis Cutrer developed the Negro Law Enforcement Committee, comprised of twenty-two black leaders, to “study the high rate of murder among Houston Negroes,” noting that “80 per cent of the murders in Houston involved Negroes.” Since most crime was intraracial, this likely meant that black Houstonians disproportionately accounted as offenders and victims of violent crime. And Houstonians were not alone. Black people around the country shared these sentiments, reflecting on the “Negro crime rates” in their respective cities. For example, William O. Walker, publisher of the *Cleveland Call and Post*, argued, “If Negroes could populate schools at the same rate that they do jails we would be the best educated people in the world.” Such influential publishers and policy makers argued a multi-pronged approach to dealing with the problem of so-called black criminality: a refashioning of the moral fiber of young black people, increased policing—though “this is not to say that a cop on every corner is needed,” the *Informer* cautioned, just that “the presence of more officers in the general community is worth-while”—and harsher sentencing for intraracial crimes. As “corrective action,” the editorialists at the *Informer* believed this would encourage people, both interpersonally and institutionally, to value black people’s lives.¹⁶

These contemporaries were certainly addressing a troubling phenomenon: heightened levels of crime that disproportionately affected black people. However, they were engaging in racecraft. Racecraft describes the ways people are disciplined into an episteme wherein they understand race not as a consequence of social structure, but as a primary cause of sociopolitical difference—this “they” referring to all those, historically and currently, who have inherited a racialized society. Fields and Fields provide a helpful example:

The shorthand transforms *racism*, something an aggressor *does*, into *race*, something the target *is*, in a sleight of hand that is easy to miss. Consider the statement “black

Southerners were segregated because of their skin color”—a perfectly natural sentence to the ears of most Americans, who tend to overlook its weird causality. But in that sentence, segregation disappears as the doing of segregationists, and then, in a puff of smoke—*paff*—reappears as a trait of only one part of the segregated whole.¹⁷

“Negro crime,” then, even as just a phrase, is produced through racecraft, suggesting that “Negro” can be a modifier of “crime.” As Khalil Gibran Muhammad argues, this practice of “writing crime into race” and writing race into crime, especially through crime statistics, served to justify the continued marginalization of black people from American political life through the 1940s. During Jim Crow, “black criminality,” Muhammad notes, “had become the most significant and durable signifier of black inferiority in white people’s minds,” confirming, indeed, that black folks were unfit “for modern life.” This was certainly the logic of Texan segregationists after the Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Board*, who claimed, “[T]he fact remains that the Negro’s crime and illegitimacy rates are everywhere so vastly greater than those of the whites that these statistics have an alarming impact on the minds of parents” who did not want their children “thrown into rather intimate contact with colored boys and girls.” One retired Houston teacher feared that if integration caused white students to “learn to like [black people] better” the entire white race would “go to the dogs.”¹⁸

In 1957, Richard Dilworth, mayor of Philadelphia, in an effort to dissuade interracial violence in his city, “criticized ‘constant reiteration about Negro crime.’” He explained, “There’s no more crime—in fact, there’s less crime—in low-income Negro districts than in low-income white districts. There just happens to be more low-income Negro districts.” At least on its face, the statistical evidence suggested that black people were rabid criminals, but, at least for Philadelphia, the mayor argued, this was misleading. For him, the problem

was economic inequality rather than race.¹⁹ Many Houstonians reasoned the same was true for their city. One reader wrote to the *Informer*:

I keep reading from time to time that Negroes commit more murders than anybody else in Houston. Somehow I don't believe the picture is complete, if one just takes the total number of murders committed by any race. Are our poor housing, our lack of healthy and proper recreation centers, both combining to drive our people more into beer taverns...?²⁰

Editorialists in the newspaper noted the poor living conditions of black people across the country as the nation's black population transitioned from being primarily rural to majority urban and argued that the mass expansion of "low-income Negro ghettos" were a consequence of structural inequality, including those maintained by patterns of "the flight of segregation-minded white [people]." They succinctly summarized their argument this way: "Negroes are not the creators of these conditions, they are the victims of them."

Americans gave increasing attention to this way of framing the problem of crime in black neighborhoods over through the 1960s, as the Liberal Consensus solidified, though historian Elizabeth Hinton argues, because of their prevailing anti-black prejudices, liberals failed to execute a War on Poverty that would ultimately ameliorate these conditions, and instead manufactured an apparatus that more likely to harass, surveil, abuse, arrest, and incarcerate young black Americans than to train them for skilled employment or otherwise produce jobs.²¹

However, even these more structuralist articulations of crime risked committing what Muhammad calls "writing crime into class," and they were definitely often interpreted as such.²² That is, as the twentieth century progressed, biological racism fell out of favor, and color-evasiveness ascended, class-based explanations of crime found a productive ideological partnership with cultural racism. Namely, rather than interpreting structuralist arguments for the causes of crime as critiques of the systems that produced those

conditions, people often instead rearticulated them as critiques of people living in poverty and what they—the critics—identified as the “culture of poverty.” Responding to these facile interpretations, Gordon Blaine Hancock, writing for the Associated Negro Press, informed readers that *no* scientific studies justified a belief in either a racial or cultural link to an objective standard of “morality.” He doubled down on the argument that race was a consequence rather than a cause, writing, “This column has often contended that the Negro is just what the white man made him! If he had made a better Negro, he would have had one. The present Negro is a creature of the white man’s creation and that the prejudiced whites would stigmatize their own creation is unbelievable.” Hancock masterfully exposed the machinations of racecraft and demanded Americans, black and white, revisit the historical causes of black people’s poor living conditions and over-exposure to crime.²³

Yet, even as black folks in Houston and around the country developed rhetorical, scholarly, and political strategies for undermining the racialization of crime that threatened to keep them marginalized from American sociopolitical life, they also had to contend with their material reality. Namely, black communities suffered from crime and stigmatization in ways that white communities—specifically the non-impooverished ones—did not. Because of segregation, whether poor, middle class, or wealthy, black Houstonians lived in elevated geographies of risk compared to their class-equivalent white counterparts, who secured homes in neighborhoods that were less densely populated, more residential in landscape, and without racial stigma.

Whether “black people” committed more crimes is a question produced by racecraft. But some people marked as black, just as people of any so-called race, did commit crimes. Yet because “[t]he process of segregation raises the probability of intra-group conflict not only by virtue of its power to generate proximity and intimacy, but also by

virtue of its power to reduce respect for the areas that are segregated into deteriorated,” black communities faced heightened risks of exposure to criminal activity and under-protection. Indeed, these consequences were all the more real for people marked as black because they often happened in relatively densely populated, segregated spaces that served a population that was spatially marginalized—not by choice, but by force. Residents of Third Ward, Fourth Ward, Fifth Ward, and increasingly Sunnyside and Acres Homes often read about their neighborhoods as hotbeds of violent criminal activity on the front pages of the *Informer*. And crime in these areas, caused variably by “unemployment, poverty, hunger, inadequate housing, [and] educational problems,” among other factors—all with their roots in racial stigmatization and segregation—significantly impacted the life chances of “nonwhite” Houstonians, in terms of a range of health outcomes and premature death by homicide in the middle of the twentieth century.²⁴

The pattern in Houston did not differ from other places. Crimes committed by black people against other black people were treated with greater leniency than crimes committed by black people against white people, if they were treated at all. One black Houstonian noted, “A Negro can kill another Negro and if he has the right lawyer he can come clear, but if he kills a white man he’ll be electrocuted. If a white man kills a Negro he usually gets out of it without any trouble.” Thus, rather than focusing on protecting black people, whose neighborhoods did suffer some of the highest rates of violent crime in the city, “many white policemen typically acted as if it were their duty to keep black folks in ‘their place’ and make them stand in fear.” These patterns of practice toward black Houstonians would continue into the 1960s and through the twentieth century, and, according to U.S. House of Representatives member Craig Anthony Washington, earn the city and its police department “the dishonorable distinction of leading the Nation, and

perhaps the world, in police misconduct, complaints, and litigation,” defined by a failure to honor “its responsibility to protect all its citizenry.”²⁵

In 1940, Charles A. Shaw, of the Watchtower Life Insurance Company, wrote to Walter White, secretary of the NAACP, about “the victimization of Negroes by police thugs in Houston.” White had received a letter from a white businessman in Houston about the brutality he had witnessed and had written Shaw for further enlightenment. Shaw responded, saying, “It is true that the police department of the city of Houston has been charged, and in a number of instances, proved guilty of brutal impositions on colored people...” Shaw opined, with Carter Wesley, that evidence suggested that too many of Houston’s police officers “were former convicts and the lowest type of poor whites,” suggesting that these kind of white people in particular received some particular psychosocial benefit when they attacked black people with impunity. The original letter to Shaw from the anonymous white businessman suggested as much, when he claimed, “Our police force in Houston is recruited from the cattle rustlers from the Panhandle, Oklahoma and Arkansas.” He continued that Houston’s “tough police” appeared to “take delight in beating up colored citizens for the gun it gives them.” Using poor white men as a scapegoat for violent white supremacy was probably an oversimplification, but physically violent interracial strife in Houston did often involve working class people, as in the case of Johnnie Lee Morris.²⁶

Wesley did not shy away from publishing testimonies of police brutality, throughout the 1950s, perhaps because he had suffered his own unprovoked run-in with the police in 1940. Driving near Spring, Texas, on a trip between Dallas and Houston, two highway patrol officers “greeted” Wesley “with licks”—that is, they attacked him on the road. They claimed that Wesley had waved to a man in a passing car. Writing to fellow attorney

Thurgood Marshall, he explained, “No, there wasn’t any woman with him, so there was no question of mashing.” Mashing was the slang equivalent of flirting or making amorous advances. He denied waving at anyone at all or having any trouble before the officers stopped him. However, when he was finally released he had been charged with “resisting arrest,” and had several injuries to show for it. “My jaws are swollen up like somebody having the mumps,” he reported, “and my lips are cut clear through where those babies kicked me after they got me down.”²⁷ Wesley, then, understood the lengths that officers were willing to go to cover their unlawful arrests and assaults, and how simply being black could be enough provocation for the police to attack.

The overwhelming majority of the eighty-two cases of police brutality reported in the *Informer* in the 1950s occurred in the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards, where black Houstonians were most densely compacted and closest to downtown. They were often attacked by police for petty reasons. One black man, James Burns, was beaten by white officer W. H. Rankin on May 30, 1950 after the officer arrested him for “jay walking” on the 200 block of Hamilton Street. On June 20, 1950, two black teenagers, Michael Thomas and Angelo Simon, were “cursed and beat... in the stomach and on the legs,” with one of them sustaining injuries on the mouth as well before being handcuffed and taken to the police station downtown. The young men had been watching a show through a hole in a fence at the Lyric Theater at the Public School Stadium in Third Ward before heading off, when the officers stopped them on the street and “accused them of stealing radios out of parked cars.” Thomas, only thirteen years old, had been riding his bike when an officer stopped him, Simon, and Simon’s girlfriend, who had been at the Lyric Theater with them, to ask “what he was doing.” Thomas told the officer that he was “inspecting the back tire of his bike.” Now joined by his partner, the officer forced the teenager into a driveway and the

two insisted to Thomas that he had stolen radios and demanded he show them where he had them stashed. Thomas and Simon alleged that the officers continued beating them as they drove them to the police station. They were “released when the special officers said they did not have anything against the boys.” The officers told the young boys to “account for their bruises by telling their parents they got them by ‘falling down.’” The officers apparently received no reprimand. The *Informer* also reported, on the same day, the case of Leslie Jones, a fifty-year-old resident of Fourth Ward, who claimed that “two police officers,” one white and one black, “beat him on the porch of his residence,” just a few days prior to the young men’s arrest. Jones was unaware of what provoked the attack, other than that he was trying to enter his own home while the police were talking to another resident. However, by the end of the ordeal, he found himself picking peas and hoeing vegetables on a “pea farm with his eyes almost closed from bruises” from the beating, after he was unable to pay a “\$10 fine on the charge of drunkenness.”²⁸

Understandably, then, black Houstonians maintained little trust for the police officers who seized their neighborhoods. They often found that the narratives they heard from their neighbors regarding encounters with police contradicted the stories police told when justifying their actions. In May 1952, a group of about thirty citizens, led by Sid Hilliard, petitioned Houston City Council “to investigate and take steps toward preventing future abuse and beatings of persons questioned or arrested by” the police. While black Houstonians had been enraged by acts of brutality for some time, the recent case involving the drowning of Ruben Holiday, a black man in police custody, proved to be too egregious to simply add to the tally. In February of the same year, Holiday had been arrested on a “disturbance charge” and was in the custody of two white officers, M. M. German and D. F. Scott. The officers claimed that they placed Holiday in their patrol car, and on the way to

the police station, they stopped at the lake to let him relieve himself since “there were [no restrooms] available for Negroes.” Then, they claimed, he “ran into the lake and drowned in an attempt to escape.” The family doubted the officers’ tale, noting that it was dubious that Holiday, who had “served in the navy for four years and was an expert swimmer,” would have drowned in a lake, much less one like Dodson, which was more a marsh that neighborhood children regularly traversed and fished in safely.²⁹

Black men, then, seemed fair game for persecution by officers, whether those officers were white or black, and regardless of the severity of crime for which the black person stood accused. Sometimes, as was the case with Jones, an accusation did not even need to precipitate the harassment. While on his way home from work in Fifth Ward, two patrolmen stopped brakeman A. R. Collins just before five o’clock in the morning. He had been walking down Hardy Street “when the two officers cut their car over on the wrong side of the street and drew up to the curb and threatened him with abusive language and to get his -- off the street.” The officer in the passenger’s seat was “slumped over in the seat as if he were asleep,” Collins recalled, while the other, “who spoke to him smelled of alcohol and talked like he had been drinking.” Black Houstonians expressed great unease when they learned of this incident and others that preceded it, telling the *Informer* that “the officers have indiscriminately begun to abuse people on the streets.” In one instance, a black man gave the *Informer* an eyewitness account of a “Negro handcuffed in the back seat” of a parked patrol car “being held by one officer while another officer on the outside of the car was beating the prisoner through a window of the car with a flashlight.” Several business owners in the area corroborated the witness’s story, and none knew what eventually happened to the man.³⁰

Often these encounters, which followed petty accusations, resulted in serious injury or death. In March 1955, Hosea Harris Jr. was taken by police “for allegedly crossing a downtown street on a red light.” The traffic officer who cited him—Harris claimed for crossing on a caution rather than a red light—had treated him fairly enough until two other officers arrived and escalated the situation by “pushing him [Harris] around.” The three officers seized him and beat him “without reason, causing him to lose two teeth.” The officers, as was standard, “denied” the assault and instead claimed that the young man had resisted arrest and had “jumped on the three of them.” In another case, Elmore Haywood, a thirty-seven-year-old working class man, “was severely beaten” on September 11, 1955. While sitting in a black-owned barbecue spot on Liberty Road in Fifth Ward, talking with the owner Eugene Barnett, Haywood was approached by two officers who asked his name and searched him. Another officer arrived shortly thereafter and accused Haywood of “calling people over the phone, cursing them.” They arrested and removed Haywood from Barnett’s Barbecue. Later that evening, Haywood arrived at the Jefferson Davis Hospital with a “cut over one eye,” as well as a lacerated liver and pancreas. The Homicide Department reported “no record” of the beating.³¹

While the justifications officers gave for their brutal behavior—that is, whatever crime they alleged had taken place in a particular case—were not always clear, the function of keeping black Houstonians in their “place” remained consistent. In this way, police brutality resembled American racialized lynching, where black victims of white terrorism were often attacked even when they had been accused of no crime but had stepped out of their prescribed “place” in the social hierarchy. Verdell Phillips, a black American Second World War veteran, claimed that a white officer, B. H. Terral, “beat and arrested him on traffic violations” at the start of the new year in 1955. Phillips claimed that he was backing

out of his driveway in Houston Gardens, a black neighborhood that had been subsidized and developed by the Suburban Resettlement Administration under the New Deal, when he heard Terral yell, “Back on across the road, Nigger.” Phillips disobeyed, realizing that the officer could give him a ticket for driving across the street in reverse, so he pulled back into his driveway. The officer blocked his car in, exited his patrol vehicle, and began beating the twenty-three-year-old. Afraid for his life with Terral threatening to pull out his gun, Phillips “ran around the back of the house with the patrolman in pursuit.” The officer fired a shot into the ground, frightening the fleeing man. He caught Phillips, threw him to the ground, “and started beating him again.” This time the officer “was trying to cock his gun to shoot me,” Phillips claimed, so he wrestled the gun away from the officer. With the tables turned, the officer requested his gun back, claiming he was “not going to do anything, but just wanted to talk” with Phillips. Phillips “returned the gun and entered his house,” only to be followed by the officer who “broke his back door down... and came into his house, firing another shot which hit the washing machine.” Phillips recalled the persistent cop saying, “G—D--- Nigger. I ought to shoot you.” The bizarre interaction de-escalated once more when Phillips managed to take the gun from the officer again, who then begged for his firearm, reportedly saying, “I love colored people.” After he returned the gun a second time, another officer, J. H. Robbins, arrived and arrested Phillips, placing him in a patrol car where Terral continued to beat him on the way to the police station. A neighbor confirmed the details of Phillip’s account to the *Informer*, at least as things had transpired in the front of the house where she could see. Terral claimed differently, saying that Phillips tried to flee when he asked him to pull over. When asked if he called Phillips a “nigger,” the *Informer* recounted that he “replied tersely, ‘He might be a nigger.’”³²

This kind of verbal degradation often accompanied police violence against black people, and functioned to configure black people as less valuable humans than white folks in white imaginaries. In 1959, Dewey Havnott, a thirty-seven-year-old resident of Sunnyside, submitted a notarized statement to the *Informer*, claiming that police officers told him, “Nigger, we want you to run so we can shoot you,” as if he were an animal they were hunting for sport. He had been sitting in his truck, “about 1:20 a.m.... waiting for his wife” who worked for a janitorial service about twelve miles away from their home. Just before he could exit his vehicle, “the larger of the two officers” who had approached him, “got ahold of his arm and snatched him out of the truck,” and then both began to assault him. Havnott refused to run from the officers, though he expressed shock and trauma that he had been attacked because it was his first run-in with police officers at all. He worried that the officers “got a thrill out of the way they treated him more than anything else,” and that they enjoyed “continually refer[ring] to him as ‘nigger.’” Despite calling him a “bad nigger,” the officers refused to put Havnott in handcuffs, probably, he inferred, to encourage him to try to run away. Eventually, they booked him downtown for having a prohibited knife in his truck that he said he had salvaged from the trash eight months prior and had forgotten about. When Havnott’s wife arrived to collect him, she was glad to find him alive.³³

John Broussard also fortunately escaped death. Patrol officers Ralph Wood Jr. and William Vicar claimed they had arrested Broussard on an auto theft charge, off of Jensen Drive in the Fifth Ward area in October 1951. At the time, black Houstonians were still incensed by the arrest of Johnnie Lee Morris and raising money for his defense. Wood and Vicar claimed that Broussard attempted to assault one of them, had escaped the police vehicle, and ran. They claimed they “shot him in the back ‘as he whirled around,’” because he had “come up on them with a grass scythe.” An anonymous witness told the *Informer*

that Broussard was shot and then beaten by police afterward. Another witness said she watched and heard as Broussard pleaded to the brutal officers, "Please don't kill me, I was just trying to help my sister." The "gang of police" handcuffed him, according to the witness, and told the frightened man, "Shut up boy." The officers attempted to coax a confession out of Broussard at the scene, but he refused to admit that he had attacked any law enforcement personnel. The *Informer* reported that, "Both the witnesses said that Broussard lay for a long time before an ambulance was called," and that it was possible that emergency medical personnel may have been present when initial police backup arrived but that it "may have been a white ambulance." Broussard was eventually transported to a hospital, where he recovered.³⁴

Ephron King Jr. was not so lucky. King's mother, Edna Slater, declared to the *Informer* that police officers "went into my son's house and murdered him." King lived in Fourth Ward with his common-law wife's twelve-year-old son, who was a witness to the encounter. Officers R. L. Crane and Leslie McGee claimed that they were following up on a report of two men in an altercation on Crosby Street, when they found King with a knife in his hand arguing with another man on a front porch. According to their statements, they ordered him to drop the weapon "and he refused," after which they attempted to arrest him. He resisted, they said, and when Crane "tried to get on the porch, [he] lost his footing and slipped and the man 'swung at him' with the knife." McGee countered, saying he chased King into the house, where both officers "grabbed King," causing him to lose the knife. Somehow, the man "jerked free," found the knife, and threatened the officers with it. Shortly thereafter, the officers shot and killed him. King's mother doubted the veracity of the story, saying that King was "partially paralyzed on the left side," that "he had not been able to do heavy work in a long time," and that "he often visited her and she gave him

financial assistance.” The son-in-law suggested that Slater’s concerns were valid, noting that officers shot King not because he threatened him, but rather overreacted to King’s attempts “to pull his paralyzed left hand out of his pocket with his good right hand.”³⁵

In rare incidences officers might be charged with a crime for their violence against black Houstonians, but all-white, all-male juries did not exhibit any particular desire to protecting black citizens. In June 1954, Tom C. Pickens, an officer who had been with the Houston Police Department for about three years, killed Ira Williams, a thirty-two-year-old resident of Fifth Ward. Williams had been attempting to “escape from the Oriental Grocery store,” where he had been accused of theft. The officer claimed that Williams “tried to stab him in the face with a sharp polished instrument” both in the store and after he had managed to get outside. Williams claimed self-defense for the fatal gunshot. Two witnesses, however, testified that Williams had never had a weapon in his hand, and the autopsy revealed that the bullet had entered into Williams’ back rather than his front. Despite being charged, however, Pickens was not found guilty and reportedly continued his career as chief of police in a small town west of Houston. Such was the culture of the Houston Police Department. When black Houstonians met with Chief L. D. Morrison two years prior to present a petition against brutality, Morrison “scolded” them and made “no promises” regarding investigations of their claims.³⁶

The assaults against black men by police reflected black men’s particular, disproportionately greater exposure to violence in public in general. But, while black men likely suffered physical police violence more often, black women still accounted for more than one out of every four incidences of brutality recorded in the *Informer* for which race and gender details were included. And, as had been true with Carter Wesley, class status and education could not insulate black people from police assaults. In December 1950 Ethel

Woodard, “underwriter for the Golden State Life Insurance Company,” reported that she was “manhandled” and subjected to “vulgar abuse” by city traffic officers after a fender bender. A white taxi driver hit her car as she, her two children, and her mother drove down Alameda Road, likely on their way home to Third Ward. She recalled that when the officers arrived on the scene, “she was caught by the shoulders and shoved over to the officers’ car” because she “insisted on telling her version of the accident.” The officers “yelled” at Woodard’s mother, Aline Matthews, when she “jumped out of the car” and questioned why her daughter was being arrested. One officer responded, “You get on back into that car!” When they arrived at the police station, the arresting officer explained to the lieutenant that Woodard had been arrested for refusing to follow orders, and also noted, “Some other old nigger woman jumped out of the car and ran over there. I guess it was her mother.” The lieutenant seemed to be amused when Woodard spoke up against the racial epithet, asking her, “Don’t you like to be called a Negro—aren’t you proud to be a Negro?” The officers placed her in a cell with a phone and told her to call for someone to “get her out.” While in the cell, she overheard an officer say to a jail matron, “I have a damned old nigger gal down here that don’t want to be called a nigger... should have whipped her G..D..A.. you know what to do.” Fortunately for Woodard, her stay in jail was short, as her fiancé arrived to post her \$25 bond shortly thereafter. She learned that she was being charged with a failure to “move on.”³⁷

Woodard said that “she had never before witnessed anything like” the kind of abuse of power the officers demonstrated, though, like many black Houstonians, she noted, “I have heard of it.” She managed to leave the ordeal legally unscathed in January 1951, as the charge against her was dismissed in municipal court following delays because her arresting officer refused to attend. The judge admitted that the arresting officer had wrongly

imprisoned her, and affirmed her right to have her version of events recorded in an accident report. Another black woman who had also been falsely arrested in a rooming house she operated also found her case dismissed in the same court. However vindicating these outcomes may have been for the black public who showed up to support the women and had been preparing a campaign against police brutality in their honor, the arresting officers were not reprimanded by the court, and systemically, police violence against black women was not challenged.³⁸

While Woodard certainly did not escape her ordeal without some emotional scars, other black women endured physical bruises as well. Evelyne Bradley, an eighteen-year-old expectant mother, had to seek treatment “for both mental and physical conditions” according to her doctor at the Houston Negro Hospital after her encounter with officers. On May 18, 1952, Bradley was taken from Jefferson Davis hospital by police officers for unnamed reasons, but perhaps because she “might have been acting abnormally,” due to her mental health condition. She spent four hours in custody, at which time her husband, an air corps member at Ellington Field military base arrived and paid her five-dollar bond. By the time of her release, however, she had been “strapped down and beaten” by one of the jail matrons, and her doctor told *Informer* reporters that she had sustained “bruises on her back and legs that could have been caused by a lash.” When questioned about the incident, at least one police official passed the buck to another division of the department.³⁹

As was true with black men, just being a black person in public exposed women to unscrupulous police officers. Houston police officers arrested a twenty-year-old Woman in the Air Force (WAF) downtown near the intersection at Congress and Austin streets where she was waiting for a bus to take her to the Heights neighborhood. She had just gotten her hair done and was heading to a friend’s house to prepare for an affair at the

YWCA when the officers drove by, one asking her out of the window of the vehicle, “Say nigger, what are you selling it for?”⁴⁰ The woman recalled the incident for the *Informer* investigator:

I did not answer. They backed their car up and yelled at me again with vulgar language asking if I did not know how to answer a question. They got out and grabbed me by the hair and swung me around and cursed me. They twisted my arms and bent my fingers. I could not help myself and I screamed until some people came out to see what the trouble was. But there was nothing (the people) could do. The officers put handcuffs on me and pushed me into the car.⁴¹

She said that when they arrived at the station, the arresting officer was unprepared to report why she had been brought in, and spontaneously said, “Well, let’s see, just book her for hustling.” When they learned that she worked at Ellington Field, they ridiculed her, saying women only worked on the military base “to have men,” and proceeded to ask her “if I did not have enough men on the base and had to come to the streets of Houston.” Despite the *Informer*’s interest and the potential involvement of the NAACP in the case, Chief L. D. Morrison, who had ordered the investigation into the bombing of the Caesar house, said that “as far as he could see there was no case against the officers.” Prominent black church folk of Houston repudiated the officers’ claims, testifying that the woman was “a perfect ideal of fine womanhood.” While the “charges” against the woman were not filed by the department, neither were the officers disciplined for their actions.⁴² As the WAF’s case demonstrated, black women were objects, simultaneously, of white men’s sexual desire and antipathy, and therefore were never safe in public, especially when the people who were employed to protect them were their predators.

In a similar case, two white police officers raped a twenty-one-year-old black pregnant woman in their patrol vehicle in 1953. She had been at Club Matinee when the officers “took her... on the pretense of arresting her.” After they had her seized in their car, they informed her “they wanted to become intimate with her.” Doctors at Jefferson

Davis Hospital confirmed that she had been assaulted. Upon hearing the story, Houston's NAACP, led by Christia Adair, the Harris County Council of Organizations, headed by Sid Hilliard, and the National Council of Women, directed by Anna Harris, a black Fifth Ward activist, reproved the grand jury which acquitted the officers. The *Informer* feared that "Texas' famous one-sided justice has proved itself champion again." The officers resigned from their posts, although Chief Morrison and Assistant Chief Seber assured reporters that they had not asked the officers to do so.⁴³

Though black women suffered particular risks because of their oftentimes unwitting social location at the frontier of interracial sexual liaisons, black male police officers could also be a danger to black women and communities. One Houstonian confirmed for researchers that "Negro policemen have a poor image in the eyes of Negroes," and a survey of 383 black Houstonians revealed that they felt the types of abuse they suffered from black and white officers were the same.⁴⁴ In June 1952 Gaudy Horn, thirty-one years old, was arrested by two black officers, William Perry and "Dykie" Henry, on a "failure to move" charge. She left the ordeal with a broken jaw. Standing at the corner of Lyons Avenue and Hill Street in Fifth Ward, Horn had been conversing with "an acquaintance from Galveston... when the two officers ordered her and the man she was talking with to move on." She said she did not hear the officers, but the man did and the two began walking. However, before she could take any more than four steps, she "was overtaken." One of the officers "grabbed her right arm, twisted it back to the center of her back and began slapping her on the face and striking her with a flashlight." Together, the duo "dragged her to a police telephone call-box," where they summoned a police wagon driven by two white officers. Once she was thrown inside the vehicle, one of the black officers began "beating her through" the wagon's window while cursing her and "demanding that she perform a

perversed sex act upon him...” The white men “got tickled and laughed” as Horn suffered the beating, and the black officer continued to entertain them until one of the white officers finally said, “That’s enough.” When the *Informer* investigated the incident, Horn was still “unable to move her lower jaw,” and could only speak through clenched teeth through her six-week recovery. Despite witnesses testifying that Horn had neither assaulted the officers, resisted arrest, nor used vulgar language toward them, Perry maintained that he “slapped” Horn “because she bit him...” This seemed enough to satisfy the curiosity of the department.⁴⁵

Mary Emma Johnson could not suffer the indignity of assault without trying for some compensation for her pain, specifically because the injuries she endured made it impossible for her to support her nine-year-old daughter. With attorney Francis Williams by her side, the Fifth Ward resident explained that the department needed to compensate her for her injuries. She was sitting at a buffet on October 1, 1950, when a black police officer “came in and told her, ‘Come on let’s go...’” Startled, she asked the officer why she was being removed and he grabbed her by her right arm, “twisted her arm backward, lifting her from her seat and breaking her arm” with such force that she “heard the bone crack...” A bystander called an ambulance, as the officer refused to acknowledge her cries that he had broken her arm. X-rays at Jefferson Davis Hospital confirmed that her humerus had been broken and that her right hand would be paralyzed as a result. Despite a surgeon’s attempt to restore the use of her hand, it remained unmovable. Forced into unemployment, the woman could only collect twenty dollars from the Harris County Welfare Department and mostly relied on friends to support her and her daughter.⁴⁶

These assaults against black women greatly angered the black public in Houston. One writer to the *Informer* raved: “Who are Negroes’ protectors? What are we paying poll

taxes, city taxes, county taxes for? Tell me, where is our money going? For the laws to help molest our women, if they are considered people? No, there are no women in our race.” Violence against women cemented for black people, it seemed, even more than violence against men, how very little worth their lives carried in the minds of police officers and white people in general. Though some white women wrote into the *Informer* after the rape of the Fifth Ward expectant mother, explaining that they too had been recently assaulted by police, in general white Houstonians did not extend public displays of sympathy or empathy toward black female victims of police brutality. The editorialists at the *Informer* derided these actions and attitudes with fervor, writing, “Abusive conduct to a woman, coming from an officer of the law, seems to us as inexcusable as anything could possibly be.” Treatment of black women, then, became the litmus test by which black folk could measure how much white people valued their humanity. For, within this gendered logic, if an agency couched in a rhetoric of chivalry could not make itself protect the womanhood of these black people, they could not be expected to act as honorable men otherwise. Insofar as white Americans considered there to be “no women in the Negro race,” letter-writer C. R. Johnson opined, then black women were “not human beings” in white people’s thoughts or practices.⁴⁷

Neither white nor black men had a monopoly on misogyny, and the violence police officers and white employers directed against black women did not represent the limit of risks black women faced in a segregated society. Indeed, these only exacerbated the general patterns of violence against women in American society for black women, since black women were made increasingly vulnerable without access to economic and municipal and county resources—namely a police department, sheriff’s department, and court system that was not dominated by white men—that could protect them from violence in their own homes.⁴⁸ That is, gendered violence by loved ones could be more severe for black women,

who were racially segregated, economically exploited, and viewed as “not human beings” because of their racial location as black, their gendered location as women, and their geographical location in “criminal spaces.”

One measure remarkably consistent across both the *Informer* and the *Post* was the proportion of victims of crime by sex (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). When the sex of the victim was included in the stories, in both the *Post* and the *Informer* men made up six out of every ten victims of all crimes, and women only about four of every ten. These numbers are commensurate with crime data even into the twenty-first century, where the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) record that men are about 60 percent of all victims of violent crimes, and women just above 40 percent. When disaggregated to look specifically at victims of intimate partner violence, family violence, or violence committed by a stranger in the context of public harassment (excluding incidences of rape by a stranger), women jump to 85 percent of victims in the *Informer* and about 90 percent of victims in the *Post*. These numbers, too, are consistent with BJS data in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, where women typically account for about 86 percent of the victims of these types of crime, and men only circa 14 percent.⁴⁹ Thus, the newspapers likely captured, with a measure of accuracy, insofar as the standard is official statistics, the gendered impact of crime in Houston during the 1950s.

The stories of violence against black women recorded an important aspect of the lived experiences of some women. Although the stories usually accounted for one or two incidences in the life of a particular woman, when the woman’s voice broke through the newspaper reporter’s or the police investigator’s narrative of the event, these women often revealed weeks, months, years, and decades of abuse at the hands of loved ones—fathers, step fathers, boyfriends, husbands, and paramours—as well at the hands of those ex-lovers

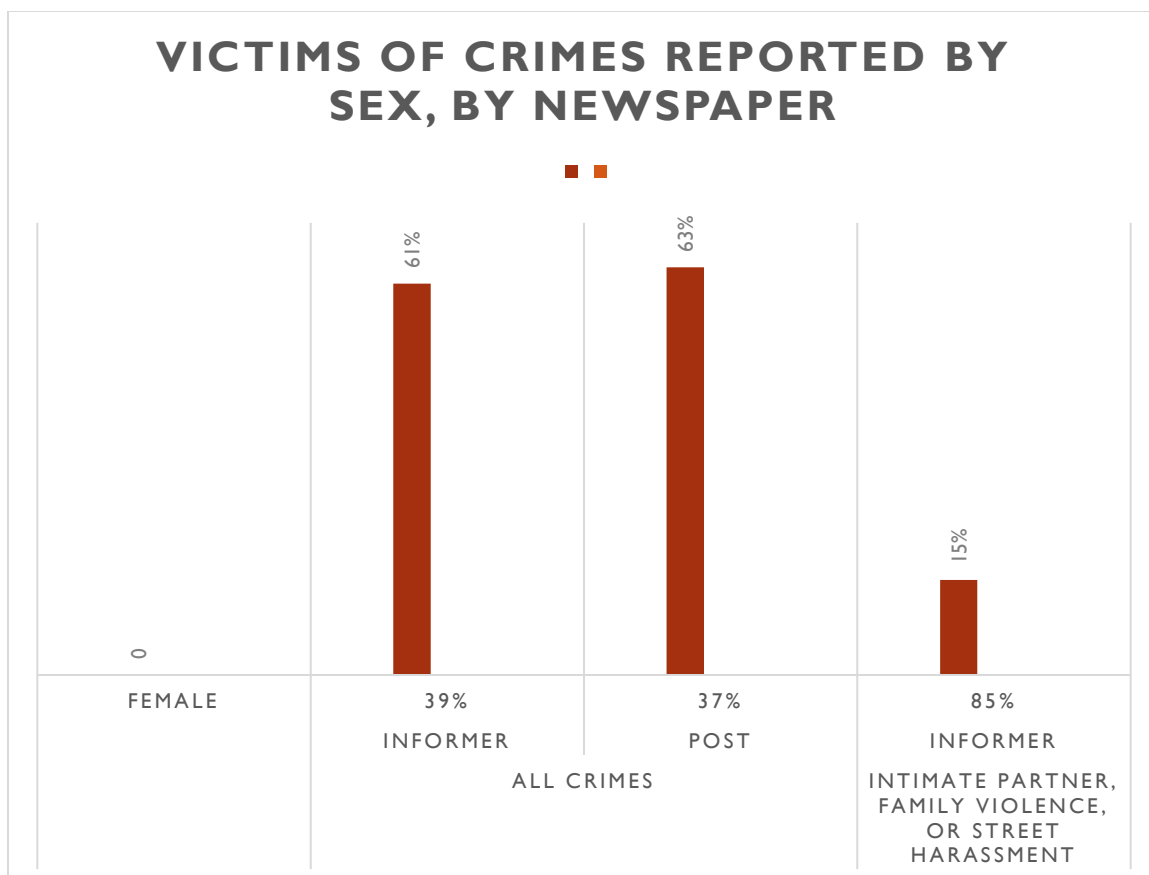


Figure 4 Proportions of victims of crimes by sex, when reported, by newspaper.

and ex-spouses whose abuses they tried to escape by severing their relationships. They also revealed that women could be victimized at any time—although with less frequency—by random men, on the street or at a café, who demanded black women’s attentions, and when rebuffed, acted out in violence.

Between 1950 and 1959, 263 incidents of domestic violence or street harassment violence against black women appeared in the *Informer*. Physical assaults, which included assault to murder, assault with a weapon, and aggravated assault accounted for sixty-three percent of all incidents (see Figure 5). Murder comprised another thirty percent. However, black women were sometimes the persons charged with the particular crime being reported in the newspaper. For instance, in my counting, if a woman was charged with the murder of her abusive husband, I included that in my dataset as an incident of murder, rather than the

provoking crime of assault. In other, fewer instances, a black man might have been killed by a black male in-law seeking to protect a mother or a sister. Thus, while black women accounted for 100 percent of the reported victims of rape, vandalism, arson, attempted rape, and breaking and entering, in other instances they retaliated and were charged with the particular crime reported in the *Informer* (see *Figure 6*). This was true in about one-sixth of the threat of assault cases, about two-thirds of the physical assault cases, nearly half of the murder cases, and fully half of the justifiable homicide verdicts. All in all, while black women sometimes retaliated against their assailants, the majority of these newspaper reports suggest they often suffered assault with little reprieve until, it seems, they were driven to kill their assault perpetrator.

Younger women were more likely to experience violence than older woman, especially those in typical child-bearing or child-caring years (see *Figure 7*). The vast majority of these women were victimized by their husbands, who were reported as six out of every ten assailants (see *Table 4*). Former partners, married and not, accounted for about fifteen percent of the men who victimized black women. Predictably, because of the positive effect of racial segregation on the rate of endogamy, black men accounted for 257 of the 258 assailants of black women where the racial category of the assailant and the victim were discernible.⁵⁰ Additionally, almost seven out of ten of these victims of violence shared a residence with their assailants. Fifth Ward (see *Map 17*), one of Houston's predominantly black neighborhoods, which suffered from economic exploitation, municipal neglect, and police brutality, serves as a visual microcosm of this phenomenon.⁵¹ The *Informer* reported twenty-three events involving violence against women there. Those twenty-three women lived in the Ward, as did twenty of their assailants. The women shared residences with

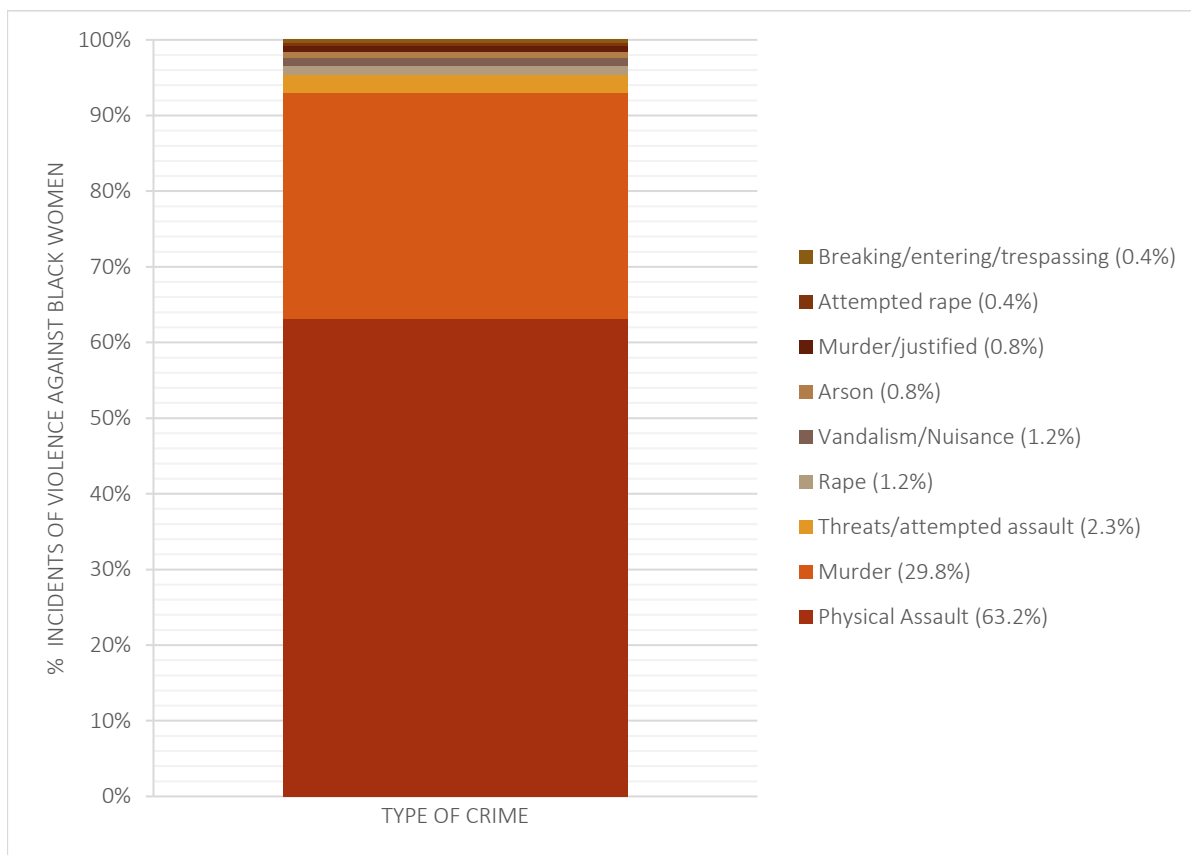


Figure 5 Proportion of crimes reported in incidents involving domestic violence and street harassment against black women in the Informer.

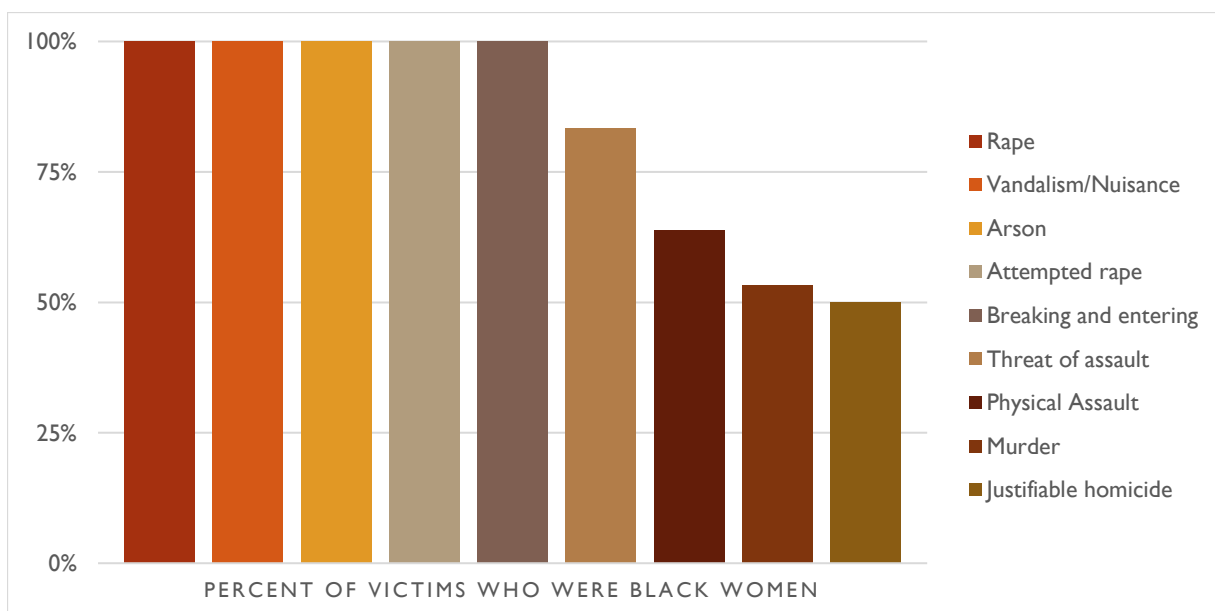


Figure 6 Proportion of black women who were victims (i.e., the party not charged) of the reported crime in instances of domestic violence or street harassment against black women in the Informer.

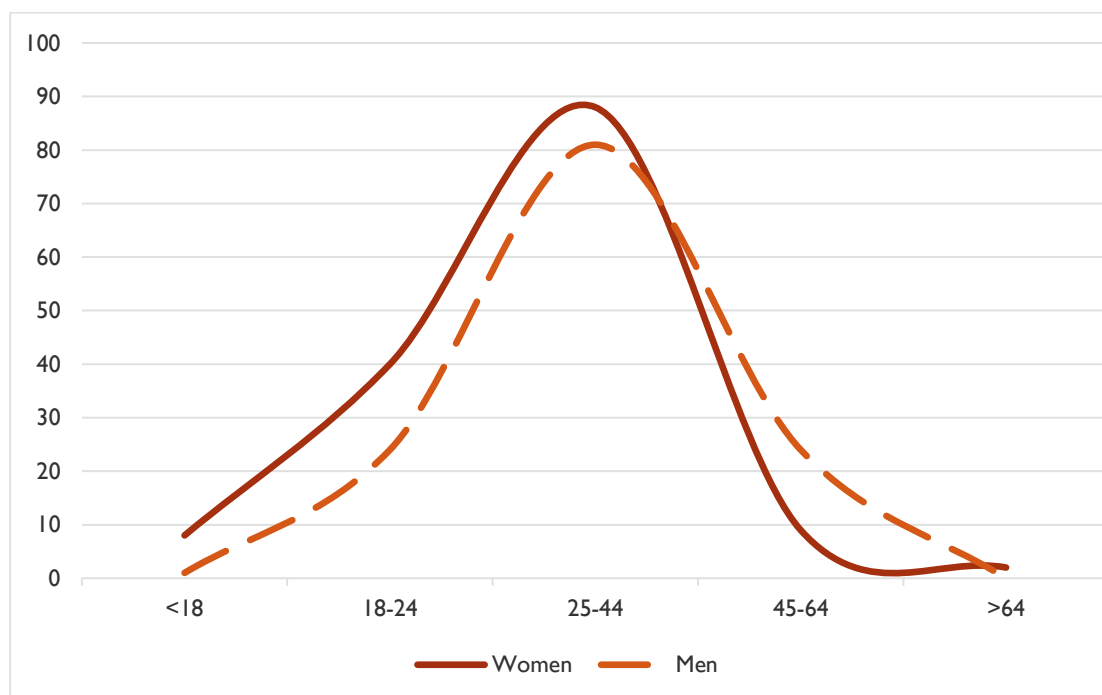
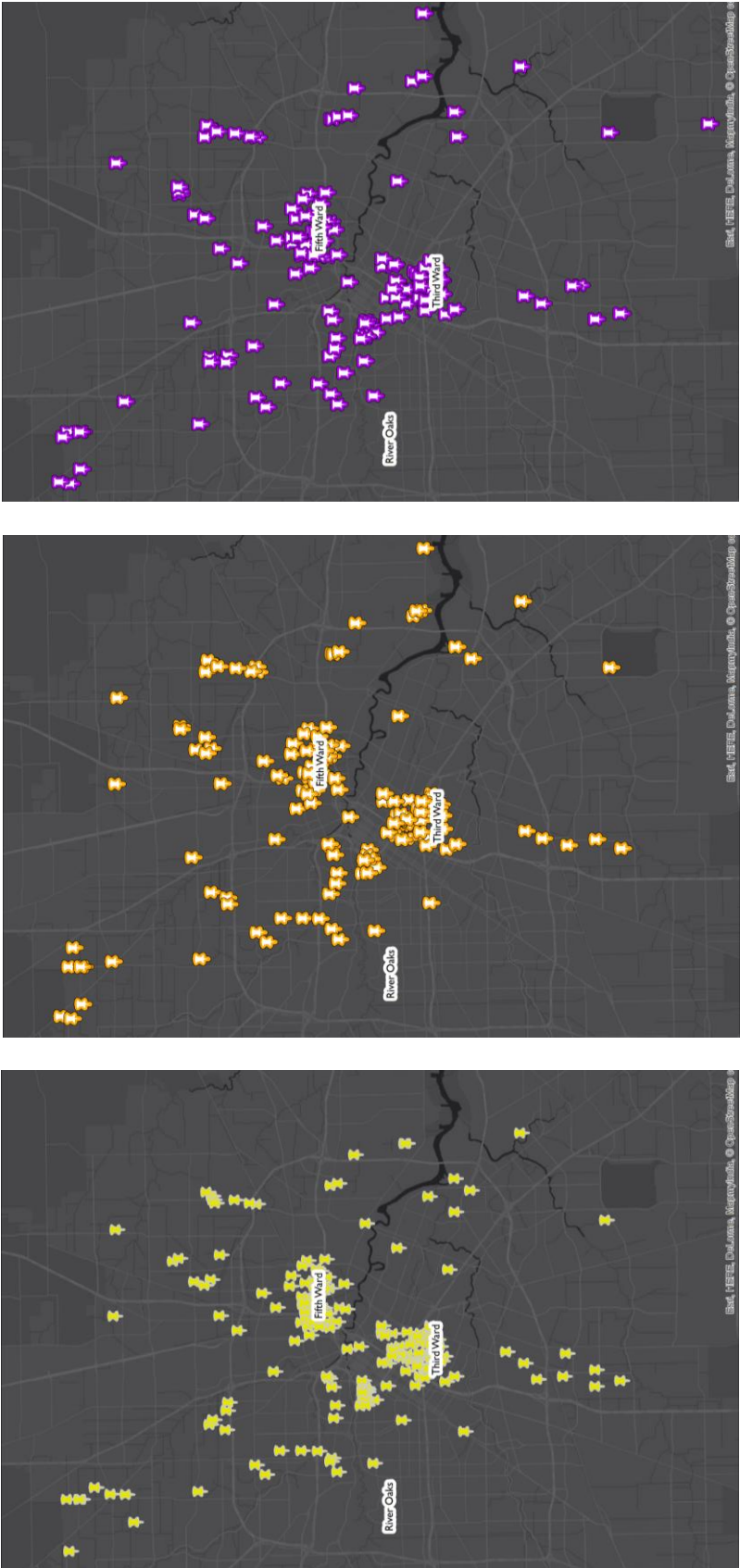


Figure 7 Number of black women and men in each Census age group, when recorded, at the time of each incidents' reporting in the Informer.

Relationship Type	Frequency	Proportion
Married	90	39%
Common-law married	48	21%
Unmarried intimate partner	22	9%
Separated	10	4%
Divorced	5	2%
Scorned	4	2%
Ex-relationship	21	9%
Unspecified involved	11	5%
Parent	2	1%
Parent's partner	2	1%
Unrelated (street harassment)	12	5%
Family member	5	2%
Total	232	100%

Table 4 Black women's relationships to their assailants, when reported, in the Informer.



Map 17 Locations of incidences of violence against black women, juxtaposed first to their own homes and second to their assailant's residences in Houston.

eighteen of these assailants, and were victimized in their own homes in almost one out of every three attacks.

Some men seemed to think any provocation they could muster was an excuse to harass the women they lived with. Clifford McGee stabbed his wife Bessie McGee because “she was away when he got home.” Torras Franklin felt justified in killing his wife Vivian Booker Franklin, claiming that he murdered her because “she told him she had ‘another man,’” and that she attacked him. Dorothy Jean Bean’s husband brutally beat her in their home when she objected to his bringing a dog to their residence. She admitted to peace officers that “she was afraid to return home” and wanted to “file charges and seek a divorce from her husband.”⁵²

Yet, neither filing charges nor divorce were guaranteed safeguards against scorned male partners. Mack Coy Moses arrived at the home of Williar Alma Moses—his ex-wife—unwelcomed and unannounced. Entering the front door “without knocking,” he told Mrs. Moses that he was “moving back in.” She thought he was joking, and allowed him to eat dinner with the family. However, when he attempted to shower, she called her lawyer and the two men proceeded to argue over the phone. Later that evening, Mrs. Moses’s ex-husband “crawl[ed] through a bedroom window” and shot her before committing suicide. In another case, Myrtle Lee Jackson’s common-law husband Silles Nealy stabbed her in public with no reported motivation. Though she reported the incident to police, a week later he stabbed her again, this time in their home. Asking for the state’s intervention in domestic affairs angered men whose own masculine identities were likely wrapped up in desires for autonomy from obligations imposed by either the state or their romantic partners. Marion Wilson demonstrated this masculine anxiety when he “tackled” his nineteen-year-old wife Geraldine in her maternity dress, “telling her she had better stop going to the probation

department” where she had complained of “his failure to support his child.” It remains unclear if the probation department successfully protected Geraldine Wilson from her husband, why Marion Wilson was on probation, or if his failure to provide financial support to his child was due to unemployment.⁵³

Even when they did not share homes with their partners, many black women were not safe behind the doors of their own apartments or houses. In several instances, angry and drunken partners would force their way into closed doors or crawl into open windows to attack these women. The motivations were not always clear. Sometimes the attack was precipitated by a quarrel over money or accusations of infidelity. At other times, the men blamed their actions on alcohol. But, consistently, when a woman demonstrated autonomy by locking her front door and telling an angry partner or ex-partner to leave her be, the rampaging man would become more determined to make his way inside. Such was the case of thirty-four-year-old Bernice Churchwell, whose unmarried intimate partner, Ira Lee Turner, cut open her screen door and barged into her house before beating her with no reported motivation. James Devine, surly because his wife had separated from him, showed up at her residence unwelcome, then “jumped on her and hit her with a chair.” She ran into her bedroom to grab a pistol and shot a bullet through the door to scare him away. The incensed man left, went to his brother’s home, and returned to Mrs. Devine’s residence, brandishing a .410 single barrel shotgun, apparently unperturbed that the couple’s children were inside the home with his wife. The family ran out of the house and into a yard. When police finally arrived, James Devine was charged simply with “rudely displaying a firearm.” Danger was even more imminent for Florence Smith, also separated from her husband Robert Lee Smith. The couple had been apart for nearly six months when he knocked on the door of her home. “When she saw that he had a gun,” the *Informer* reported, “she

didn't let him in." The frightened woman, who explained that "she didn't know why her husband had done this," hid as he shot six bullets into her bedroom and kitchen.⁵⁴

Violence could also occur in automobiles, both parked and moving, taverns and cafes, and public streets. Twenty-seven-year-old Ruby Robinson shot her husband Eugene, forty-one years old, after he attempted to stab her while driving during an argument in which they accused each other of being unfaithful. Despite two witnesses in the backseat who corroborated Mrs. Robinson's account, the young woman was charged with assault to murder. And Ollie Dean Brooks, thirty-five years old, finally had enough of her husband's mistreatment when she followed her husband, Otis Hall, thirty-nine, to a café down the street from their home, and stabbed him. Mrs. Brooks "explained that her husband had mistreated her so much before that she was afraid of him." A few nights prior, she reported, Hall had "struck her with a stick and twisted her arm." On the day of the stabbing, in March 1955, she said that Hall threatened her with a knife and commanded her to have abandoned the home by the time of his return. Driven by fear, and probably also rage, Mrs. Brooks retaliated against her husband, perhaps the only way she knew how.⁵⁵

Less often, but no less mortally endangering, were the chance encounters black women had with street harassers—strange men who demanded their attentions in random public encounters. Elizabeth Maddox and her friend ignored the advances of a group of men as they walked down the street in a neighborhood just north of Fifth Ward. Angered by the rebuff, the men stalked them down the street and eventually caught up with them. Ms. Maddox said one man grabbed her by the arm. As she struggled to escape his grip, he punched her several times in the face, "loosening several teeth." Mamie Johnson, twenty-two years old, was also attacked by a man whom she refused to entertain. Clyde Moore struck Mrs. Johnson, whose husband was at work, and snatched "some of her hair" out of

her scalp because she refused his offer to drink a beer with him. Likewise, Tommy Jones “used” thirty-four-year-old Lucille Wilson “as a punching bag” when the woman refused his advances at a local drive inn. Yet, even when the women attempted to entertain these street harassers, they could find themselves victims of men’s violence. Ernestine Batiste obliged Johnny Jefferson, who offered her a drink outside a lounge close to her home, but when she got up to leave afterwards he followed her to the door of the establishment and called her “dirty names” before he “pulled a pistol, and hit her several blows to the head.”⁵⁶

The indignities black women faced were therefore multiple and in no ways limited to Houston’s predominantly white spaces. No location appeared wholly unthreatening to marginalized women living, working, and playing in a society that both devalued their blackness and their womanhood. Certainly, black women sought police protection, but often learned that their complaints would not be taken seriously by officers. Madeline Scott ran to a police officer in Houston’s Third Ward, desperate for protection from a man, George Washington Robinson, who had been beating her on the street. The officer ignored her plea, telling her to file an official charge downtown. Only moments later did the officer finally intervene and arrest the man when he saw Ms. Scott being dragged in public by her neck.⁵⁷

Thus, many black women did what they could to avoid police officers, who represented other forms of danger to them when they were not being outright negligent. In 1953, Carter Wesley noted that black Houstonians were incensed at the case of several white police officers who were no-billed on charges of rape against a black woman by an all-white, all-male jury. This decision “put a tarnish on justice in the minds of a great many Negroes in this community,” Wesley remarked, “which will go with those Negroes through

life.” He continued that the decision “left so many women feeling as if they are unprotected entirely on our streets.”⁵⁸

For this reason and probably others related to their economic and physical vulnerabilities, many black women avoided filing charges against their husbands and partners. Victims of personal crimes frequently do not report offenses to the police because they fear retaliation by their assailant, downplay the significance of the offense, or believe the police would offer no relief. Black women have historically been, and continue to be, even less likely than other population groups to seek help from the police when they are assaulted. As women who are victims of male assaults, they were often blamed for attacks against their own persons. As black women, they were often compelled by a “cultural expectation of keeping their business to themselves,” as well as the demands of so-called racial solidarity to refuse to air black communities’ dirty laundry. If black men were stereotyped as violent and dangerous, black women had an obligation to protect “their” men from continued stigmatization by keeping assaults by black men a secret. These black women may also have understood that seeking help from the state might increase their risk of death, given that they were often offered little or no protection even after they filed charges against their abusers. Additionally, as black women, they were not understood to be “true women.” Longstanding and flatly false stereotypes about black women’s supposed biologically determined, insatiable sexual appetites had prompted Americans and their courts to see black women as undeserving of redress when violence, sexual or otherwise, was committed against them. And women were thought to bear responsibility for the “moral” state of their racial groups, stereotypes about black criminality and promiscuity also suggested that black women were to blame for the “denigration... of the *entire race*.”⁵⁹ As not-quite-women, then, black women were often regarded as aggressors rather than victims when they

interacted with the American “justice” system. They may have also feared, simultaneously, that “Negrophobic” police officers would “overrespond” to calls for help by meting out incommensurate punishments, such as premature death, to black men.⁶⁰

Without the ability to rely on state resources, as illustrated earlier in *Figure 6*, many black women retaliated against their assailants, sometimes to the point of killing them, whether in rage, fear, exhaustion, or all three. However, when they protected themselves, black women also placed themselves at risk of a heavy-handed court system that frequently refused to see them as victims. Luiener Garrett, owner of Garrett’s Blue Room, was attacked by her husband, Fosier Garrett, at her business. After he threw a bottle at her, she shot him in the arm. When police arrived, Mrs. Garrett was charged with assault. Twenty-four-year-old Verna Glenn was also charged with assault against her common-law husband, Otis Westbrook, twenty-six, when she answered his physical attacks by shooting him. Elnora Brown was charged with murder after she killed her ex-common-law husband, Herman Brown. Three weeks prior to the June 1959 incident, Mrs. Brown had “terminated” her marriage because living with her ex-husband “became unbearable.” She reported that he “beat her several times, shot at her twice, and always accused her of having affairs with other men.” She testified that she lived in fear of his attacks, and sought help from a neighbor, asking her to call the police if the man returned and she signaled distress. When Brown forced his way into her apartment that evening, moving threateningly in her direction with a wrench, she shot him. When the police arrived, they arrested Mrs. Brown. Even when witnesses corroborated black women’s claims of self-defense, police would still immediately arrest and charge them, as was the case with Shirley Ann Freeman. Robert Lee Harris “started to beat” his common-law wife and “advanc[ed] on her with a knife.” Witnesses testified that Mrs. Freeman “begged him not to come up on her, but he kept

coming and she shot him.” She, too, was charged with murder. Although many black women who retaliated with violence against their partners were no-billed by grand juries, this may have reflected what Carter Wesley had referred to as the cheapness of black life in Houston, where crimes against black people were not taken seriously by courts.⁶¹

Escaping abusive relationships through other means was not always successful, either. Though some black women attempted to flee abusive relationships, flight was not always a successful cover from persistent ex-partners. Because their families often lived in the same neighborhoods as their abusers due to racialized residential segregation and because a long history of economic exploitation left many black women without the necessary resources to leave abusive spouses or migrate independently on a whim, when many fled they could not go very far. When Ruby Lee Robinson attempted to get away from her abusive common-law husband, she absconded to her sister’s residence. A week later, the angry Ray Robinson broke down the sister’s door and threatened his wife with a knife. She was charged with murder after she shot her attacker three times.⁶²

The quest for economic independence could insulate some women from abusive, patriarchal relationships. But, while some black women were able to establish brick-and-mortar businesses in order to provide for themselves and their families in an age of legal stratification of jobs and careers by race and sex, others managed their own “economic self-reliance” through sex work. While interracial sex remained a strong taboo through the middle of the century and beyond, black sex workers found markets flush with demand in cities throughout the country, including Chicago, New York, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, and Houston. Though Houston’s vice districts had been dismantled earlier in the twentieth century, in the 1950s the city, like historian Kevin J. Mumford describes was true in Chicago and New York, had “interzones.” These were spaces wherein people across racial, gender,

and sexual spectrums produced cultural forms and patterns of social interaction that defied hegemonic norms. These spaces also served as interracial sex markets, a frontier where black women could commodify the taboo of interracial sensuality. As historian Cynthia Blair explains for Chicago, in Houston, too, the actions of white folks—to consume and police black sex workers as a “titillating if dangerous commodity”—had the effect of transforming black spaces into “sexualized and criminalized territor[ies].”⁶³

Black women’s sex work, in Houston and elsewhere, could be a kind of entrepreneurial work that freed such women from underpaid domestic labor or potentially overbearing romantic relationships with men who might use their economic position to demand a girlfriend or a wife’s subservience. However, sex work was not free of its own risks. Venereal disease and physical violence at the hands of pimps, johns, or “bawdyhouse” proprietresses were dangers these workers had to contend with. Additionally, these women were often treated as outcasts by “respectable” black folks and as criminals by municipal authorities. Thus, while sex work presented a line of flight from certain social and economic constraints, it was still a kind of work available to black women because of (rather than in spite of) the racial, gender, and sexual hierarchies that had long limited their group socioeconomic mobility. As historian Tera Hunter explained, whether in domestic labor or sex work, “White Southern domesticity at nearly every level of society was built on the backs of black women.” Thus black women’s employment “options” were always the consequence of constraint.⁶⁴

The Houston informants for Gunnar Myrdal’s *American Dilemma* never failed to address that a market for interracial sex prevailed in Houston. H. T. Brooks noted, “I know where there are some colored prostitutes who cater to white men.” Ira B. Bryant remarked that you could read stories in the press “about white insurance men being robbed” in black

neighborhoods, but left unsaid in the newspapers was that underlying “all of this are these sex relations between... white men and Negro women.” Freddie Collins likewise answered questions about sex relations in Houston by saying, “I have heard that there are some Negro women who live with white men. I don’t know any. Of course, there’s a lot of Negro women that just sell themselves to white men.” And Dr. C. T. Ewell, specifically discussing exogamy, noted that he believed while taboos prevented intermarriage, white people acted out in ways that revealed “not as much aversion to mixing as the people of the south like to try to make us believe.”⁶⁵

As they were in other cities, Houston’s interracial sex markets were situated in black neighborhoods, where white men could cross racial borders, geographically and sexually. Black middle class residents often resented that their economic capacity did not function in the same ways it did for white middle class folk, who were typically insulated from such environs. In 1958, the city’s vice squad “closed in” on one such “love nest” situated in one of the wealthiest parts of Third Ward. “Sugar Hill,” as the area was called, was informally composed of the neighborhood blocks on the eastern and southern sides of Texas Southern University’s campus. Professors, entrepreneurs, and students bought, rented, and built “palatial” homes on spacious plots of land, and home owners often participated in annual contests for the most beautiful gardens, which typically lined the borders between their green lawns and their brick houses. Like their white middle class counterparts, they fought to maintain the residential quality of their neighborhood through litigation against “encroach[ing]” businesses, meeting varying degrees of success. However, because of their proximity to some of the poorest neighborhood blocks in Houston and because interracial sex markets were not permissible in white neighborhoods, the black residents of Sugar Hill remained exposed to levels of petty crime associated with the

conditions of impoverishment, while their neighborhood was also a prime location for the siting of interracial sex houses.⁶⁶

When the vice squad arrived in Sugar Hill to raid the home of a twenty-nine-year-old black man—a house that doubled as a brothel catering specifically “to white clientele”—they arrested four people. On August 13, 1958, Robert Thomas Kane, a white man, asked a black taxi driver, Ernest Jackson, to help him find a black woman for sex. The driver picked up Inez Wilson, who agreed to the liaison for ten dollars. Jackson dropped the couple at the “love nest” address on Wichita Street, where shortly thereafter, on a tip, officers arrived and arrested Kane, Jackson, and Wilson, as well as another black man. While Kane was quickly released, the three black people were “held” for further “investigation.” Thus, patterns that existed elsewhere in the country were also replicated in Houston: white men’s consumption of sex across racial lines remained less egregious acts than those who were willing to supply services to meet those demands, and black neighborhoods, including wealthy ones, remained viable sites for “vice” to be sited in their communities in ways that were incommensurate with the income and professional characteristics of the residents. But whether in Third Ward, Fifth Ward, Sunnyside, Independence Heights, downtown, or traveling to and from work in River Oaks, black women remained vulnerable to white men who expressed sexual desire for black women. These men could molest black women, sex traders or not, with impunity.⁶⁷

As was also true in other cities, the interracial sex trade in Houston included gender variant workers and clients, and these workers were also overexposed to environs of violence and practices that specifically targeted them for criminalization. However, because of their rather non-heteronormative experiences with gender and sexuality, they were also exposed to additional geographies of risk over their life courses. In the 1950s, these

workers were variously called homosexuals, cross-gender, transsexual, or people who had undergone “sexual conversion.” The labels were often unclear and none of them were used across all platforms consistently; for instance, people who would identify as trans* today were sometimes called “homosexuals” or “female impersonators” in the *Informer* in the 1950s. At other times the press would avoid such labels at all. But while Americans debated how to label the increasingly titillating topic of “trans-sexuality,” especially following Christine Jorgensen’s 1952 public statement regarding her gender identity and gender-affirming surgery, the reality was that many black people had long identified and behaved in ways that disturbed the hegemonic concepts of biological determinism, compulsory heterosexuality, and sex dimorphism. And many of these folks, often self-identified black women, but sometimes comfortably binary-defying gendered persons, were visible workers in Houston’s interracial sex market. Like other black women, they remained at risk for violence because of the nature of their work. Thus, for some, intra-community violence as well as violence as a way of life became unremarkable experiences.⁶⁸

In July 1957 Johnnie Mae lived in Third Ward on Sauer Street just a few blocks east of bustling Dowling Street with her roommates. She was a sex worker with a long criminal record, but with a much richer biography than her run-ins with the police suggested. She probably had a difficult time finding a job in Houston’s formal economy, since she called herself “a male” who had been “a female impersonator for 19 years” and identified herself strictly as a woman. She was probably not deemed fit for typical work available to black women, nor did she seem to desire the kinds of employment that prevailed among black men.⁶⁹ Thus, sex work may have been her only option, and she may have learned to operate in that market at a fairly young age.

In 1937, when she was around seventeen years old, Johnnie Mae was sentenced to Gatesville State School for Boys in Coryell County, Texas, for unspecified reasons. Black juvenile “delinquents” disproportionately populated the barracks at the reformatory, which was less a rehabilitation school and more a “punitive” hold that resembled adult prisons. Children and teenagers could be sentenced for curfew violation, petty theft, or more serious violent crimes. Teachers there viewed inmates as “‘incapable’ of working at grade level because of innate deficiencies in intelligence,” and in 1936 “97% of white [children] and 94% of black [children]” at the school “were working below grade level.” Thus, Gatesville resembled Texas’s other “prison plantations” rather than a reformatory, where “‘inmates’ rather than ‘students’” were forced to do hard labor under the heavy hands of “untrained staff as ‘guards’ rather than ‘mentors.’” Overcrowded and racially segregated into separate barracks and work spaces, black inmates bore the brunt of Gatesville’s penal practices and labor demands.⁷⁰

How Johnnie Mae came to her particular conviction about her gender identity also remains unclear. However, she began her life as a self-identified woman shortly after her arrival at Gatesville. Like other inmates, Johnnie Mae may have been the victim of sexual assault, and perhaps particularly targeted for assault because of her sexual and gender identities. These assaults could have been perpetrated by other children or by adult staff members. In 1944, “several boys” exposed the sexual coercions practiced by R. B. Johnston, official sociologist at Gatesville, in which they traded sex acts “in exchange for favorable work placements and accelerated release recommendations.” Any inmate, no matter their sexual or gender identity, could be targeted by such predatory adults who maintained unsupervised access to them.⁷¹

For girls like Johnnie Mae, the danger was even more imminent in a boy's prison.

Historian William S. Bush explains that at Gatesville:

For boys, a "homosexual" diagnosis might come before or after a sexual assault; regardless, it signified physical weakness and emasculation as much as a supposed preference for other boys. To be designated a "punk," remembered C.W. [an informant], was to be told that "you were small and everyone could run over you." C.W. lived in the "punk dorm" reserved for "passive homosexuals," all of whom were "smaller boys" but not self-identified homosexuals. The African American inmates who lived in the other "punk dorm" objected even more strenuously to their official diagnosis. One of them, J.H., insisted that he was a "dude" rather than a "punk." To draw distinctions clearly, he mentioned "Slut," a smaller boy to whom he attached the pronouns "her" and "she."⁷²

Those inmates who did not perform masculinity acceptably were therefore additionally vulnerable to violence in a carceral regime that actively helped produce their stigmatization. In these prison spaces, the "punk" was "exploited as a female surrogate" by more dominant, and thereby more "masculine" figures. That is, Gatesville, and places like it, exposed girls like Johnnie Mae to rape and male ownership. Thus, physical, sexual, and emotional violence were likely familiar to Johnnie Mae by the time she emerged from Gatesville and eventually began her life in Oklahoma as an exotic dancer before she eventually moved to Third Ward. But before she left, Gatesville possibly shaped her as a violent actor in both the prison and after her release. Indeed, because of these patterns of educational, labor, and sexual neglect, abuse, and exploitation, District Judge Paul A. Martineau described Gatesville as "a terrible place where criminals are made."⁷³

As an adult, Johnnie Mae certainly became involved in law-breaking activities. At twenty-one years old, she was sentenced to prison for three years "for sodomy on an 11-year-old boy," a term which she did not serve to completion.⁷⁴ Johnnie Mae also became a repeat perpetrator of violence and a recidivist criminal. Though historians can only speculate why she turned to violence in her adult life, given the ubiquity of violence at Gatesville and against sex workers, Johnnie Mae was likely a young victim of violence and, as

research shows, children who suffer abuse exhibit similar forms of violence in their adulthood.⁷⁵ In 1949 she was arrested for “cutting a man with a razor.” A few months later, in January 1950, she again found herself in the throes of the criminal court system, arrested for “‘hustling’ men downtown,” and the following month for doing the same in the Fifth Ward. Later that year, she served three months for “assault with firearms.” In February 1951, she was arrested for “vagrancy,” wearing attire described as “women’s clothes.” Later that year she was “arrested for prowling along streets,” once again for “vagrancy,” and then in June “for wearing women clothes.” She was arrested an additional six times between 1953 and 1956 for “impersonating a woman.”⁷⁶

Johnnie Mae suffered the consequences of being an illegible kind of woman in a society that criminalized her body, as well as her gender performance and performativity. However, this stigmatization was apparently not so severe that Johnnie Mae and those like her were simply locked away from society for long periods of time. “Female impersonation” did not carry a heavy sentence, and the majority of Third Warders, their Christian moral objections notwithstanding, seemed nonplussed by the fact that gender variance and non-heteronormative sexualities existed, publicly, in their neighborhood. At least for Johnnie Mae and the scant other trans* and gender-nonconforming black folks who appeared in the press, the communities they lived in did not seem to react violently to their presence, even if, like other Americans in the 1940s and forward, they became increasingly concerned with “sexual deviance” as a threat to national security.⁷⁷

But in July 1957, Johnnie Mae was implicated in a murder, which did attract the attention of her neighbors and the *Informer*. The murder of William Henry “Red” Gill was a confusing tale. Peaches Victoria Hubbard, a “homosexual” and Johnnie Mae’s roommate, participated in the assault on Gill. “Peaches goes with women or men, and I believe that she

and Red were sweethearts,” Johnnie Mae explained. The two apparently “operated a prostituting ring, employing teenage girls,” but Gill had outstayed his welcome. Hubbard and Johnnie Mae conspired to “move Red out” for undisclosed reasons. Together, they attacked Gill. Johnnie Mae choked the victim and poured wine in his mouth while Hubbard assisted in restraining him. Leaving Gill in the apartment, allegedly unsure if he was dead or not, Johnnie Mae and Hubbard traveled a few blocks south to Elgin Street and “consumed liquor for several hours.” Hubbard returned to the apartment afterwards and “‘found’ the dead man and notified police.” Police found Johnnie Mae and arrested her for Gill’s murder after an inquest investigation revealed a crack in Gill’s hyoid bone, and having been told by “someone” that, as she recounted, “I kill men and have sexual relationship[s] with them.” She denied that accusation, saying, “I have never done anyone any harm, nor have I been in serious trouble before.” While in custody, Johnnie Mae was questioned for the deaths of two other men, one in Fifth Ward and the other in the Rice Military area, both of whom “associated with homosexuals and, when found dead, were naked.” She admitted later that she had killed ten other people in Oklahoma using the same method of “squeezing their necks and pouring wine down their throats to give the appearance of death during a drinking bout.” She ultimately received a thirty-five year prison sentence. The motivations behind why Johnnie Mae became a serial killer remain unclear, but her particular experiences as a young black person navigating a racially segregated, misogynistic, heteronormative society in which she was not guaranteed safe, constructive, and instructive places in which to develop undoubtedly played an important determining role.⁷⁸

While Johnnie Mae may have experienced her greatest risks as a young person rather than as a sex worker, Obie Mills’s story demonstrated the dangers of being on the interracial sex market.⁷⁹ Police arrested Mills on October 20, 1959, for the murder of Billy

C. Mahaffey, a twenty-year-old, 160 pound white man ze had stabbed. Mills was thirty-nine years old, a porter by day, and a sex worker by night. The Fifth Ward resident lived in an upstairs apartment. When questioned by the press about his tenant, J. B. Busby explained that Mills was a fine resident who “always paid [the] rent,” and likewise Mills’s neighbor reported that ze had never been a “bother.” She continued, “One day I saw two women come out of the apartment across the way and I told a friend how well they dressed. But my friend told me, ‘They aren’t women. They’re men.’” The neighbor seemed unfazed by the apparent revelation, remarking that Mills “had the features of a woman, very smooth skin, and neatly dressed.” Aside from sex work, then, Mills did not seem to experience trouble with as much regularity as Johnnie Mae. Nevertheless, ze still encountered risk as a black sex worker.⁸⁰

What transpired between Mahaffey and Mills on October 17th is unclear.⁸¹ When Detectives John Thornton and J. W. Kindred arrived at Jefferson Davis Hospital to investigate Mahaffey’s death they learned that doctors had already concluded the victim had died of a stab wound to the heart at around 11:00 p.m. When the ambulance found Mahaffey bleeding in his car at the site of a minor accident on Texas Avenue in Third Ward, he was already incapable of speaking and had also sustained scratches on his neck. Thus, the detectives had to construct a narrative by working their way backward through Mahaffey’s actions that day. They returned to the location of his green and white 1953 Ford sedan, described by outside reporters as “a section populated with run-down warehouses, shanty honky-tonks, and five-dollar-a-week rooming houses,” giving the sense that the warehouse district, just east of the glimmering towers of downtown, was a seedy place for unscrupulous activity. The quantity of blood in the suggested to the investigators that Mahaffey had not been stabbed inside. They found his wallet, including just over one dollar

in cash and his driver's license, on the floor. They used the address on the license to find his rooming house at 1511 Jackson Street in downtown, about two blocks east of the warehouse district in Third Ward. Tenants and the landlady testified that the car's description matched the one they knew Mahaffey to own, and that he "was not married and was considered... to be a quiet, hard-working young man who did not get into trouble." They also questioned Mahaffey's employer at a local radiator shop who assured the detectives that Mahaffey "was an easy-going young man who did not make enemies and who would go out of his way to avoid a situation which might result in a quarrel." The detectives began imagining a scenario of foul play.⁸²

Thornton and Kindred learned that Mahaffey had been seeing a "pretty, sixteen-year-old girl" who "burst into tears" when the detectives told her of Mahaffey's death. She had last seen him at 10:30 that night. They had shared a dinner with her parents before the two took a drive to price tires, though he did not buy any because, as she recalled, "He only had a dollar and a few cents with him." The detectives then worked to trace Mahaffey's last half hour, canvassing Third Ward for the next two days until they found "bloodstains on a gravel drive beside a warehouse seven blocks east" of where Mahaffey's car and body had been found.⁸³

The following day, October 20th, the detectives came across Peggy McCloud (a pseudonym), while continuing their canvass of the neighborhood.⁸⁴ She was a black woman who had been a high-end sex trader in Galveston before "circumstances had conspired to reduce her career." She told the officers that a man matching Mahaffey's and his car's descriptions had picked her up at the corner of Dowling Street and Polk Street, and on the drive they negotiated a five dollar price for a sex act. However, when McCloud learned that the man she was now parked with in an alley could not pay, the two "had a little wrestling

match,” during which she scratched his neck before escaping the car. He chased her and they tussled again, before she finally managed to free herself. Now, the detectives understood: Mahaffey had been shopping for sex that night, and had made his way to Third Ward to get it. They questioned over thirty-five sex workers, all of whom had airtight alibis, but the investigation provided them with “a list of other streetwalkers” who had been out that night, including Mills, “who actually was a man with a long record for robbery” but apparently had only been charged once. Mills’s “specialty was to dress up in women’s clothing, wear his hair long and wavy, and pass himself off as a streetwalker,” according to the writers at *Official Detective Stories*. Mills finally confessed to the murder after all-night questioning, and police officially concluded that Mills had targeted Mahaffey for a robbery. According to them, when in the car, Mills demanded Mahaffey’s wallet at knife point, the billfold fell to the floor, and when Mills reached down to grab it Mahaffey “struck him and jumped out of the car.” Mills followed, stabbing Mahaffey in the driveway where his bloodstains had been found. The frightened assailant fled the scene, and Mahaffey returned to his car and “raced for help” before eventually crashing his car and bleeding to death.⁸⁵

Mills’s own testimony differed from the detectives’ narrative. As he had with McCloud, Mahaffey had solicited Mills for a five dollar rendezvous—though the *Informer’s* investigation revealed that his attempt with McCloud had occurred the night prior to his murder. Mills agreed to the payment, joined Mahaffey in the car, and parked at a warehouse around 2700 Texas Avenue on the northern end of Third Ward. Whether Mahaffey knew of Mills’s gender and sexuality were unclear. The *Informer* editorialized that it was the “discovery” of his “drastic error” that caused him to attack Mills with a knife, though the press has a long history of justifying violence against trans* and gender non-conforming people for their so-called failure to disclose their gender and sexual identities to men. The

Chronicle simply reported that Mahaffey “became angry,” perhaps for the same reasons he had with McCloud, who refused his advances once she realized the man could not pay the agreed price. This is a more likely explanation, given the popularity of gender-defying sex workers among white men in the section of Third Ward where he picked up Mills. Whatever the reason, Mills maintained that Mahaffey attacked zir with a knife. Mills reported that ze “jumped from the car and ran, but Mahaffey caught up with him when he lost one of his female shoes.” The two apparently struggled, the “husky radiator repairman” a looming physical threat. Finally, Mills got the upper hand and stabbed Mahaffey “to protect” zirself, before continuing to run away. Mills was convicted of the murder in December.⁸⁶

While it may have been true that Mills had a past of robbing men ze had agreed to have sex with, Mills’s own arrest record could not attest to the claim. However, because income was often unsteady for porters, and especially black ones, it was plausible that Mills engaged in both sex work and petty theft to supplement zir wages. Mahaffey’s character witnesses, who suggested he would never start a fight or be engaged in seedy activities, belied both McCloud’s and Mills’s narratives, and was at odds with the fact that Mahaffey had been shopping in Third Ward, specifically for sex with black streetwalkers. That he offered five dollars in both stories without the ability to pay suggested that he was willing to deceive sex workers and somehow escape them, perhaps through threats of violence, after receiving his goods without paying or by only paying a severely reduced price. Thus, while black streetwalkers, women and otherwise, may have been purveyors of certain kinds of violence and theft, they were also vulnerable as solitary workers left alone with men who could rob them of their labor, time, and perhaps even their lives. These workers were unrecognized by the formal economy, unprotected by a police vice squad that regularly

targeted them for arrest, and unwanted by the “respectable” class of black folk who viewed them—as sex workers—as a form of blight in the neighborhood.

Segregation, misogyny, and the racialized criminalization of space through media, police (in)action, and white Houstonians’ actions thereby had deleterious effects of all black Houstonians, and particularly those who resided in or played in its underserved neighborhoods at the urban core. Black people remained over-exposed to crimes that were incommensurate with their values and sometimes their income levels in these constructed spaces. Through the machinations of racecraft, white Houstonians, and even black folks who engaged the idea of “Negro crime,” made explicit and implicit arguments that black people, whether because of “biological” race or cultural degeneracy, had created these spaces. Thus, these criminal spaces were refractions of blackness or black cultural shortcomings. For white people, the logical conclusion was to contain black people in these geographies of their own creation through neglect when possible and force when necessary.

Accordingly, police abuse remained a threat to black Houstonians, across race, gender, and class throughout the 1950s. Yet, black people in Houston were not anti-police. They maintained a firm stance against police brutality, demanding that officers be held accountable for breaking the law, while they also requested better policing of criminal activities in their neighborhoods. In short, they wanted the police to do their jobs. At the start of the 1950s, in response to the Woodard case and others, editorialists at the *Informer* lamented that the Houston Police Department had not yet matured into a professional service, and was still defined by “intemperance, abuse, and brutality” which served to “discredit” the department in the eyes of the public. They acknowledged that “the job of a

cop is a hard one,” and that officers’ daily interactions with “irate citizens, injured citizens, [and] reckless citizens” might undoubtedly make police work frustrating. Nevertheless, they maintained, if officers were allowed to act without “courtesy and consideration,” their uniforms simply transformed them into “the strong-arm bully [rather] than the protector of society.” The following year, the *Informer* doubled down on these statements, saying that all Houstonians had to demand proper police treatment of black people, for it was “fundamentally” American to “desire... a police force that operates within the law and for the interests of the people as expressed by that law.”⁸⁷

The *Informer* warned that if abuse was accepted against black Houstonians, police officers would eventually extend that brutality to white people as well. That is, they predicted that the kinds of leniency officers were granted in uniform had implications for all members of society, and that while black people would be particularly disadvantaged, they would not be the only victims. In 1952, the editorialists remarked on this phenomenon, writing: “We have warned that intemperance and abuse of power cannot be contained, that practices used among Negroes, Mexicans, and other defenseless minorities must, of themselves, spread to others.” Indeed, even white Houstonians had begun to complain about “police churlishness” toward them. In 1950, a spate of incidences between white police officers and white taxicab drivers nearly halted much of the city’s public transportation as the drivers began planning a strike on the city. White men who worked in interracial organizations could find themselves targeted, too, for suspicion of subversive activity. And like they did with black women, white officers exploited the power of their badges to solicit sex from white women. They would fight with other white men, especially younger white men from more affluent backgrounds than they, as they did in a brawl with two eighteen-year-old “pretty boys from the Northside.” In the rare event that an officer

was punished, as was true for Richard W. Ramos Jr. and Marshall Jenkins, who received indefinite suspensions for “unnecessary roughness in arresting a prisoner” in 1953, the officer could be reinstated by appealing the case to the Civil Service Commission. Jenkins had already won such a case after he had been fired for “drunkenness and conduct unbecoming an officer” in 1945. In another case of brutality against a white citizen, Lieutenant J. R. (Bob) Davidson was suspended for “striking a prisoner... in the jail booking office,” who had been brought in on a traffic charge. The officer, however, was not charged with assault.⁸⁸

The *Informer* implored all Houstonians, regardless of race, to hold police accountable for all acts of brutality, but white Houstonians continued to identify with officers as they maintained images of black spaces as criminal ones and black people as a population in need of containment. While officers complained about the difficulty of their jobs and demanded that they be treated as heroes, the editorialists scoffed:

Policemen who talk in terms of “respect for an officer” are making a fundamental mistake. They are due no special respect, as individuals being essentially servants of the public rather than its masters. The citizen owes his respect to the LAW, not to the persons who enforce the law. The shoe really fits the other foot—officers whose job it is to enforce the law are morally obligated to respect the rights of citizens as written in law, as much as citizens must respect their ways as ‘the law.’ The head of a police force must know these things, if the men under his supervision and direction do not. Being essential to the performance of the function, he should indoctrinate his men along these lines, and eliminate those who cannot follow this approach. Without such an approach the force is itself unlawful, unmoral, unjustifiable.⁸⁹

However, because officers experienced such great immunities from accountability for their abuse of black communities, the *Informer* reasoned, they could effectively operate above the law. And while they maintained deep hatreds for black people and their communities because of their “criminality,” widespread corruption within the Houston Police Department itself extended through at least the end of the twentieth century.⁹⁰

While the *Informer* professed that police officers had the “most important” job in American society, it maintained that Houston’s police department consistently acted antithetically to its sworn purpose. The editorialists hedged, noting that their critique was made “without animus” toward the police, nor was it meant to incite public disdain for the profession. Rather, referring to a specific case regarding an attorney being publicly assaulted by Harris County deputies in a court building hallway, they wondered, how would actual “prisoners fare in their hands?” Rather than blaming the officers, however, the *Informer* urged white Houstonians to look in the mirror and recognize that the abuses they accepted toward their black counterparts by dismissing charges of brutality, as members of the reading public and as jurors in brutality cases, they contributed to “police arrogance” and violence.⁹¹ Carter Wesley specifically noted

When in the past Negroes claimed that they have been put upon and beaten by peace officers, there have been a great number of people who are inclined to doubt it. This public show of disregard for the law, for the dignity and responsibility and oath of the peace officers’ obligations and positions indicate how little chance the Negro would have for protection...⁹²

These critiques of police and white Houstonians’ lack of empathy for black people, however biting, stood harmoniously adjacent to black people’s demands for greater police presence in their neighborhoods.

In June 1954, Chief Morrison left office following a scandal in which \$85,000 worth of “dope” went “missing” from police headquarters. Jack Heard, the detective who determined the bombers of the Caesar house, would eventually be promoted to chief later that year, but prior to the announcement, the *Informer* published an editorial with advice for whoever the new hire might be. They wrote that they were “like all other Houstonians” and wanted to feel safe in their homes, neighborhoods, commutes, and jobs. “This community expects of the new chief,” they noted, “rigid law enforcement without regard to

race,” complaining that “in the past” crime in black neighborhoods had “often been allowed to flourish through police neglect to the detriment of the Negro community itself.” They demanded that no “racial considerations are even slightly involved” in law enforcement under the new director. When Heard came into office, he attended a meeting with the HCCO, wherein black Houstonians made specific demands regarding treatment of themselves as civilians and of black police officers, noting that officers should be held accountable for harassing them on the street and that black police should be granted the power to arrest suspects without regard for race. Heard said that he would make no promises, but would do what he could regarding police brutality. Additionally, he punted on the question of black officers arresting white civilians, saying no law prevented them from doing so—that it was a matter of “custom.”⁹³

By 1959, black Houstonians could still not attest to any improvement in the policing practices in their neighborhoods or regarding their persons. For them, residential segregation still meant resource segregation. Undoubtedly, violence within and imposed upon these communities still manifested in gendered and sexualized ways. In March of that year, police brutalized forty-four-year-old veteran Neal Frazier, and, when confronted by the man’s family, initially denied that he had ever been in their custody. Mayor Lewis Cutrer acknowledged the attack, which occurred in the city jail, after an investigation appeared to confirm the complaint rather than the officers’ tale that they had picked him up after he had been “run over by a motor vehicle.” When Frazier’s family finally learned that he was in the hospital following the police attack, “it turned out that he had been beaten unmercifully and so as to be probably crippled the rest of his life.” Several other cases of abuse poured into the *Informer* that week, including one in which one of the *Informer*’s own employees had been beaten, arrested, and then released by a sergeant at the police station who dismissed

the incident as “a misunderstanding.” An editorialist at the newspaper wondered if police were becoming more violent and more heinous because of “racial hatred, probably due to the issue of integration.” The coming decade would confirm that speculation.⁹⁴

Police brutality, at the end of the 1950s was “increasingly annoying and frightening” for black Houstonians, who urged protection for their communities, but distrusted that city officials cared enough to ensure that police officers actually did their jobs. Moreover, these interactions encouraged antipathies between black Houstonians and white city leaders, threatening to ignite flames between police and black civilians that the city had never witnessed before. In the 1960s, with an increasingly frustrated black community demanding rather than requesting change in Houston, these antagonisms would materialize in protests across the city and reach a fever-pitch on the campus of Texas Southern University.

Notes

¹ In 1960, the predominantly black census tracts in Houston’s inner core (namely, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Wards) did not see any overrepresentation of the age group 15-24 that is often cited as having the highest rates of involvement in criminal activity. On average, about 13 percent of the population in Harris County tracts were within that age range. All of Houston’s predominantly black tracts fell within one standard deviation (0.03, or between 10 percent and 16 percent) of the mean. Only one tract (00380000), which housed Texas Southern University, was outside that range, but was still within two standard deviations of the mean (18 percent of the tract was between the ages of 15-24 there). Thus, it is unlikely that age structure alone could explain higher rates of crime in certain areas of the city. However, it is reasonable to assume that higher rates of unemployment and lower rates of formal education completion in these predominantly black tracts would have exacerbated the economic deprivation experienced by black youths. Youth unemployment data for the years of 1950-1960 in Houston, if it can be found, would be most useful in determining the veracity of this hypothesis. (Except for Third Ward, black Houstonians’ high school completion rates for adults over the age of 25 fell outside the range of one standard deviation from the mean (where the mean was about 64% and the standard deviation was 19.8). Unemployment rates were also higher in these majority black tracts, all above the 6.9 percent upper limit of the standard deviation from the mean except for two tracts. Nearly 14 percent of Third Ward’s tract 00370000 was employed in “Other” occupations, and this proportion was outside the range of two standard deviations of the mean. It’s unclear, then, why this tract’s unemployment rates were more average than other predominantly black tracts. Fifth Ward’s tract 0010000 also fit within the average range of one standard deviation. Black workers there enjoyed disproportionately higher rates of nondomestic service jobs—about 32 percent of those Fifth Warders worked in the service industry, whereas the upper limit of one standard deviation was 25.3 percent and

the mean for all tracts was 10.7 percent.) See U.S. Census data from 1960.

- ²Walter R. Chivers, "The Negro Delinquent Section I: Crime and the Community," *Yearbook 1942* (1942): 46–48, 54, 56. Sophisticated research continues to show that white (as well as Latino and Asian) Americans believe black neighborhoods are high crime spaces, despite whether the particular neighborhood in question actually has lower rates of crime, superior schools, and higher median incomes. Lincoln Quillian and Devah Pager, "Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime," *American Journal of Sociology* 107, no. 3 (2001): 717–67, doi:10.1086/338938; David R. Harris, "'Property Values Drop When Blacks Move In, Because...': Racial and Socioeconomic Determinants of Neighborhood Desirability," *American Sociological Review* 64, no. 3 (1999): 461–79, doi:10.2307/2657496; Salvatore Saporito and Annette Lareau, "School Selection as a Process: The Multiple Dimensions of Race in Framing Educational Choice," *Social Problems* 46, no. 3 (August 1, 1999): 418–39, doi:10.2307/3097108. A great deal of criminological research continues to find that neighborhoods that suffer high rates of disadvantage also suffer high rates of crime associated with poverty. See William Julius Wilson, *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012); Lauren J. Krivo and Ruth D. Peterson, "Extremely Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Urban Crime," *Social Forces* 75, no. 2 (1996): 619–48, doi:10.2307/2580416. One of these consequences was and is an increase in police use of force, a decrease in police protection, and the stigmatization of black people as residents, whether in racially homogenous or mixed neighborhoods. Douglas A. Smith, "The Neighborhood Context of Police Behavior," *Crime and Justice* 8 (1986): 313–41.
- ³Milton Gabel and Hortense Gabel, "Texas Newspaper Opinion: I," *Public Opinion Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1946): 57–70.
- ⁴Adler, *First in Violence, Deepest in Dirt: Homicide in Chicago, 1875-1920*, 123.
- ⁵Michael L. Benson and Greer Litton Fox, *When Violence Hits Home: How Economics and Neighborhood Play a Role, Research in Brief* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 2004), <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/205004.pdf>.
- ⁶Hillary Potter, *Battle Cries: Black Women and Intimate Partner Abuse* (New York: NYU Press, 2008), 48. This is not to say that black men were "more likely" to abuse black women. It is to say, instead, that the same conditions that produce crime do not stop at the door of a home or at the line of an intimate relationship. Conditions of racial segregation and crime produced a phenomenon of statistically consistent intraracial criminal action. Black women, forced to live and play in these areas, were overexposed to these high rates of crime in these segregated spaces. This is also not a claim that violence against women is excusable. It is to say, however, that patriarchy and misogyny affect all women, and seem to be catalyzed into higher rates of violence by the same conditions that compel violent crime in general. American crime exists in a misogynistic, patriarchal ecosystem, and thus women suffer certain forms of violence practiced by men at highly disproportionate rates.
- ⁷David A. Gerber, *Black Ohio and the Color Line, 1860-1915* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976), 96–97; Jess Spierer, *Negro Crime*, ed. Roy M. Dorcus, vol. Comparative Psychology Monographs, 16 no. 2 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940), 5; George E. Simpson, *The Negro in the Philadelphia Press* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936), 115–16.
- ⁸Myrdal, *An American Dilemma*, 2: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy: 977.
- ⁹Both historical and contemporary studies emphasize this point. Sociologist Ronald Weitzer explains two research perspectives: "Because of police bias or other reasons, African American neighborhoods receive inferior treatment by police, which includes poorer service and harsher actions toward police in the community.... An alternative perspective maintains that relationships with the police are conditioned less strongly by residents' racial backgrounds than by the demands of law enforcement that vary by neighborhood class level." While the racialization of crime has played an obvious role for researchers on patterns of policing and harassment, Weitzer added class to the discussion, and found that "affluence" seemed to return "handsome dividends for white [people] but not black [people]." This suggests that police (and white Americans) don't differentiate black people by class, and that "writing crime into class," where blackness is always read as impoverished, has been a historically enduring mechanism that

negatively affects black people's relationships with police. White Americans, for their part, believed this was "rational discrimination." Weitzer continues: "Analysis uncovered two polar subthemes regarding the effects of putative criminality: black crime leads to either *justifiable* or *invidious* police bias against black citizens. Most of the white [people] who cited black criminality embraced the former position." Ronald Weitzer, "Racialized Policing: Residents' Perceptions in Three Neighborhoods," *Law & Society Review* 34, no. 1 (2000): 136, 137, doi:10.2307/3115118. Also see Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*; David Thacher, "Conflicting Values in Community Policing," *Law & Society Review* 35, no. 4 (2001): 765–98, doi:10.2307/3185416; Susan O. White, "A Perspective on Police Professionalization," *Law & Society Review* 7, no. 1 (1972): 61–85, doi:10.2307/3052829; Jeffrey S. Adler, "Shoot to Kill: The Use of Deadly Force by the Chicago Police, 1875–1920," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 38, no. 2 (2007): 233–54. LGBTQIAA+ communities, which we now know are disproportionately homeless and people of color, also have a history of being criminalized in similar ways: Martin Meeker, "The Queerly Disadvantaged and the Making of San Francisco's War on Poverty, 1964–1967," *Pacific Historical Review* 81, no. 1 (2012): 21–59, doi:10.1525/phr.2012.81.1.21; Richard A. Hooks Wayman, "Homeless Queer Youth: National Perspectives on Research, Best Practices, and Evidence-Based Interventions," *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 7, no. 2 (2009): 587–634.

¹⁰ Rose Helper, *Racial Policies and Practices of Real Estate Brokers* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969), 98.

¹¹ Schwartz, *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*; Helper, *Racial Policies and Practices of Real Estate Brokers*, 80. When white residents fled Riverside, many turned their huge homes into apartments and sold their acres of land to apartment developments. Many residential houses became commercial establishments. Depreciation of property values thereby became a self-fulfilling prophecy, and parts of Riverside where businesses came to predominate, like main commercial drags throughout the city, became hotspots of criminal activity.

Psychologist Claude Steele has helped elucidate the ways black Americans respond to their perceptions of and the realities of white people's anxieties toward them and stereotypes about them. It is not uncommon for white Americans with negative beliefs about black people to view their black friends as exceptions because of the ways those black friends seem to assimilate to "white" cultural norms. Claude M. Steele, *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011).

¹² The Golfcrest area in southeast Houston also fell outside of the general trend for the *Post*. The census tracts therein were majority white, not densely populated, and residents were well-educated (i.e., the proportion of adults who completed high school were above the city's average). However, Golfcrest's distance from the city required it to have its own service establishments for residents, and these, particularly taverns and inns, attracted the same kinds of crimes seen in areas closest to the city's core. (Neighboring Gulfgate housed one of Houston's first malls. Parsons Brinckerhoff, Federal Transit Administration, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, "Southeast Corridor, Houston: Environmental Impact Statement" (Houston: METRO, 2006), 3–32.) The crimes in this neighborhood happened most consistently on one main drag (Telephone Road) within a few blocks of each other.

¹³ Pando, "In the Nickel, Houston's Fifth Ward," 33; Blair Justice, *Violence in the City* (Fort Worth: Leo Potishman Fund, Texas Christian University Press, 1969), 76. Henry Allen Bullock's data of homicide in Houston produced similar findings. He found that nearly nine of every ten murders between 1945 and 1949 "occurred on West Dallas, Dowling Lyons, and Preston or within 8 blocks of these streets" and the majority of murders in the city happened close to the central business district. Bullock, "Urban Homicide in Theory and Fact."

¹⁴ "Stabbed Fatally Down Town; Life Is Cheap," *Houston Informer*, April 28, 1956, 1, 10. Historian Alex Byrd noted, "By the time that I got to Houston, my people were using the term to describe the area around Jensen and Lyons as a way to speak to the area's commercial demise. Empty store fronts, dilapidated buildings. It looked like it had been bombed. Like Pearl Harbor on December 8." These comments are in the author's possession and appear in comments on earlier drafts of this project.

¹⁵ Karen E. Fields and Barbara J. Fields, *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life* (London: Verso, 2012);

Derek J. Paulsen, "Murder in Black and White: An Exploratory Analysis of the Newspaper Coverage of Homicide in Houston, 1986-1994" (Ph.D. dissertation, Sam Houston State University, 2000), 9, 130.

¹⁶ "Negro Crime," 2; "Negro Crime Rate," *Vernon Daily Record*, August 4, 1960, 1; "Negro Crime Rate Problem," *Vernon Daily Record*, August 24, 1960, 2; "Quotes From Today's News," *Brownsville Daily Herald*, May 13, 1958, 3; "Crime in the Negro Community," *Houston Informer*, January 24, 1953.

¹⁷ Fields and Fields, *Racecraft*, 17. In accessible language, Fields and Fields explain why they employ an analogy with witchcraft in their theoretical work: "Racecraft shares characteristics with witchcraft, two in particular. First, there's no rational causality. We often speak as if black skin causes segregation or shootings. Second, there's (witting or unwitting) reliance on circular argument. For example, blood serves as a metaphor of race but is often taken as a feature of race, even by scientifically trained people. So we find explanations meant to be scientific that end up using logic [that] has to deny causality. For instance, they say black people get this disease or black people have more of a certain blood factor than others, with a certain statistical frequency, but you can't derive a causal explanation from a statistical frequency. If everyone takes race for granted, there's no reason that scientists would wean themselves from doing the same." Barbara J. Fields and Karen E. Fields, "How Race Is Conjured," *Jacobin*, June 29, 2015, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/06/karen-barbara-fields-racecraft-dolezal-racism/>.

¹⁸ Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, 3, 75; Louis Cassels, "Negro Leaders Urged To Slow Desegregation," *Courier-Gazette [McKinney, Texas]*, February 26, 1957, 1; Ann Northern to Allan Shivers, May 29, 1954, Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers, Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

¹⁹ "Philadelphia Race Tension Climbing," *Lubbock Evening Journal*, October 17, 1957, 8.

²⁰ M. J., "Negro Delinquency," *Houston Informer*, March 29, 1958, 12.

²¹ "Segregation Puts Blight On Most Cities," *Houston Informer*, March 1, 1958, 10; Elizabeth Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016).

²² Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, 229.

²³ Michele Lamont and Mario Luis Small, "How Culture Matters: Enriching Our Understanding of Poverty," in *The Colors of Poverty: Why Racial and Ethnic Disparities Persist*, ed. Ann Chih Lin and David R. Harris (New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008); Gordon B. Hancock, "Illegitimacy A Nat'l Problem," *Houston Informer*, June 20, 1959, 12. Hancock maintained a thoroughgoing critique of alternative explanations of the levels of crime, non-marital births, and unemployment that black communities faced, both calling out the "callousness of the Negro middle class" and calling the nation to task for its failure to fold black Americans into its so-called democratic processes. On Hancock's work, see Raymond Gavins, *The Perils and Prospects of Southern Black Leadership* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1977), 87 (quote).

²⁴ Lee P. Brown, "Innovative Policing in Houston," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 494 (1987): 130; Bullock, "Urban Homicide in Theory and Fact," 575; Robert E. Roberts and Cornelius Askew Jr., "A Consideration of Mortality in Three Subcultures," *Health Services Report* 87, no. 3 (March 1972): 263.

²⁵ James Q. Wilson and Richard J. Herrnstein, *Crime and Human Nature: The Definitive Study of the Causes of Crime* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998), 476; Mitchel P. Roth and Tom Kennedy, *Houston Blue: The Story of the Houston Police Department* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2012), 113-14; B. T. Brooks, Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas, interview by H. J. Walker, August 10, 1939, 6; Pitre, *In Struggle Against Jim Crow*, 51; *Police Brutality: Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991), 21, 161.

²⁶ Chas A. Shaw to Walter F. White, April 10, 1940, Papers of the NAACP Part 18, Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A; Legal Department Files, folder Wesley, Carter Houston Informer 1940-41, ProQuest History Vault; A Houston Citizen to Walter F. White, March 25, 1940, Papers of the NAACP Part 18,

Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A; Legal Department Files, folder Wesley, Carter Houston Informer 1940-41, ProQuest History Vault.

²⁷ Carter W. Wesley to Thurgood Marshall, May 7, 1940, Papers of the NAACP Part 18, Special Subjects, 1940-1955, Series A; Legal Department Files, folder Wesley, Carter Houston Informer 1940-41, ProQuest History Vault.

²⁸ "Await Action In Charge Of Police Beating," *Houston Informer*, June 24, 1950, 1; "Two Teenagers, Adult Charge Police Brutality," *Houston Informer*, June 24, 1950, 1; "Says Beaten On Own Step And Then Jailed," *Houston Informer*, June 24, 1950, 1.

²⁹ "Police Brutality Protested," *Houston Informer*, May 24, 1952, 1; "Grand Jury Probe Asked In Drowning," *Houston Informer*, April 26, 1952, 1.

³⁰ "Brakeman's Abuse Charge Is Being Probed," *Houston Informer*, April 26, 1952, 1, 10.

³¹ "Angry Man, 22, Charges Three Cops with Brutality," *Houston Informer*, March 26, 1955, 1, 12; "Man Brutally Beaten After Alleged Arrest By Police," *Houston Informer*, September 17, 1955, 1, 12.

³² Of course, it was also a prevailing stereotype that poor white Americans were more brutal toward black Americans than their middle class and wealthy counterparts, who imagined themselves as more cultured and civil. However, the Caesars, for example, were not attacked by poor white neighbors, but by their middle class neighbors and one poor white laborer and ex-convict. "'Beaten' Vet Charges Abuse by 'Cursing' Cop," *Houston Informer*, January 8, 1955, 1, 8; Norman I. Fainstein, Susan S. Fainstein, and Alex Schwartz, "Economic Shifts and Land Use in the Global City: New York, 1940-1987," in *Atop the Urban Hierarchy*, ed. Robert A. Beauregard (Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1989), 59; R. G. Tugwell to Committee on Agriculture and Forestry, U.S. Senate, "Resettlement Administration Program," 1936. On lynching, see Paula Giddings, *Ida: A Sword among Lions* (New York, N.Y.: Amistad, 2008); National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918* (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1919); Cynthia Skove Nevels, *Lynching to Belong: Claiming Whiteness through Racial Violence* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007). On poor whiteness, see Nancy Isenberg, *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America* (New York: Penguin, 2016); Rory McVeigh, "Structured Ignorance and Organized Racism in the United States," *Social Forces* 82, no. 3 (March 1, 2004): 895-936.

³³ "Cop Abused Him, Told Him To Run, Man Says," *Houston Informer*, June 6, 1959, 10.

³⁴ "Witnesses Describe Broussard Shooting by Police: Says J. Broussard Was Beaten after Officer Shot Him," *Houston Informer*, October 27, 1951, sec. 1, 1, 10. Such acts of brutality, of course, were familiar enough to black Americans and Broussard's story was only a local manifestation of a nationwide problem. Less than a month after the attacks on Broussard, "Word reached Houston... that Samuel Shepherd was slain and his co-defendant in the Groveland [sic], Florida Case, Walter Irvin was critically wounded by Sheriff Willis McCall who allegedly shot the men while taking them, handcuffed, from the jail to the courthouse for a new hearing." "Sheriff Slays Handcuffed Man, Telegram Charges," *Houston Informer*, November 10, 1951, 1. For a thorough narrative of the Groveland case see King, *Devil in the Grove*. The effects of police brutality and unprofessionalism were not simply felt by black bodies, Carter Wesley pointed out, but nevertheless was an "obvious inequalit[y]" that black people, "exclusively" suffered as a "group." "Poll Tax Season," *Houston Informer*, October 31, 1953, 12; Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn: Police Brutality," *Houston Informer*, July 25, 1953, sec. 2, 3. Louis Marchiafava documents multiple cases of Houston police brutality against white residents in "The Houston Police, 1878-1948," *Rice University Studies* 63, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 79-80.

³⁵ "Cripple's Mother Calls His Killing 'Murder,'" *Houston Informer*, May 24, 1952, 1, 10.

³⁶ "Cop Charged With Murder," *Houston Informer*, June 19, 1959, 1; Nelson Zoch, "Whatever Happened to HPD Academy Class #7," *The Retired Badge: Official Publication of the Houston Police Retired Officers Association*, May 7, 2015, 18; "Committee Says Chief 'Was Cool,'" *Houston Informer*, June 21, 1952, sec. 1, 1, 10.

³⁷ Male bodies, in general, are viewed as more acceptable sites of violence "in the public sphere." Black men, in particular, face the added challenge of being read as excessively "violent and aggressive." Their

humanity thereby becomes illegible. They are understood to be something foreign in a domestic space, and therefore must be subdued by the violence of “law and order” enslaved in carceral architectures. Kavita Daiya, *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 42; Michael A. Messner, “When Bodies Are Weapons: Masculinity and Violence in Sport,” *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 25, no. 3 (September 1, 1990): 215, doi:10.1177/101269029002500303; Muhammad, *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*, 4. On a related note, Fred Moten writes, “The definitional impossibility of a black public, on the one hand, and the fear of this impossible or unreadable black publicity, on the other, is at the heart not only of notions of black criminality but founds or constructs blackness--black social life--as criminality. To be black, to engage the ensemblic—necessarily social—performance of blackness, is to be criminal.” “Uplift and Criminality,” in *Next to the Color Line: Gender, Sexuality, and W.E.B. Du Bois*, ed. Susan Kay Gillman and Alys Eve Weinbaum, Critical American Studies Series (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 331–32.

Of the eighty-one incidences I culled from the *Informer*, race and gender of police brutality victims were included in the reporting sixty-nine times.

“Insurance Woman Charges Police Brutality,” *Houston Informer*, December 23, 1950, 1, 10.

³⁸ “Insurance Woman Charges Police Brutality,” 1, 10; “Says Officer Wrong On ‘Shut Up’ Demand Of Insurance Woman,” *Houston Informer*, January 4, 1951, 1.

³⁹ “Expectant Mother Charges Police With Brutality,” *Houston Informer*, May 24, 1952, 1.

⁴⁰ “Waf Charges Police Brutality,” *Houston Informer*, April 4, 1953, 1.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ “Citizens Feel ‘Robbed’ As Grand Jury ‘Clears’ Cops,” *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953, sec. 1, 1; “Citizens Express Anger,” *Houston Informer*, December 5, 1953, sec. 1, 1.

⁴⁴ “Comments by Subjects Recorded by Interviewers”; Blair Justice, “Overall Totals from 383 Interviews,” July 13, 1967, box 33, Louie Welch Papers, MSS 0051, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library.

⁴⁵ “Mother Blames Officers,” *Houston Informer*, June 28, 1952, 1.

⁴⁶ “Woman Asserts Police Broke Her Arm,” *Houston Informer*, January 26, 1952, 1, 10.

⁴⁷ “Citizens Express Anger,” 1, 10; “Police Brutality Again,” *Houston Informer*, December 30, 1950, 13; C. R. Johnson, “Rape- Law- Women,” *Houston Informer*, December 5, 1953, sec. 1, 12.

⁴⁸ Philanthropic and municipal services to help women who survived domestic violence were absent in Houston in the 1950s. Black women’s grievances—when they were heard—were therefore heard by white officials in law enforcement. In white-dominated spaces, black women lacked the social capital that white women had to be read as innocent or deserving of redress for crimes committed against them. Archivists in Houston, Harris County, and Texas more broadly note that the first signs of resources (outside of criminal courts) for women who suffered domestic battery appear in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although black churches were dominated by black women, their leadership was still largely if not completely male in most cases. Extant sermons from the period as well as editorials in the black press in Houston fail to address the issue of intimate partner violence. If black women discussed these issues in church, they may not have been preserved for historians. This makes sense, given the “culture of dissemblance” that black women practiced as acts of self-preservation. Darlene Clark Hine, *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History* (Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Pub., 1994), 37–58.

⁴⁹ See the comma separated values (csv) data files available at “Victim Characteristics,” *Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)*, n.d., http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=92#data_collections. Also see Jennifer L. Truman and Lynn Langton, “Criminal Victimization, 2013” (Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, September 19, 2014), <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv13.pdf>. Lastly, for historical data from 1973 forward, see the National Crime Victimization Survey data, available in online reference libraries

such as: “Historical Statistics of the United States Millennial Edition Online,” Cambridge University Press, (n.d.), <http://hsus.cambridge.org/>.

- ⁵⁰ In terms of method, this often required that I take the names, ages, and location data of the persons involved to check for their enumeration in the Census when race was unclear or unmarked in the newspaper reports, which they often were when crimes involved two black subjects. However, because migration to Houston during the postwar period was rapid and line-by-line Census data are only available up until 1940 (the 1950 sheets will be released in 2020), many of the subjects could not be found, and were therefore left out of this quantitative analysis.
- ⁵¹ Kleiner, “Fifth Ward, Houston”; Pando, “In the Nickel, Houston’s Fifth Ward”; “Fifth Warders Blast City For ‘Neglect,’” 1, 8.
- ⁵² “Shot By Mate,” *Houston Informer*, August 16, 1952, 2; “Man Uses Hatchet To Kill Wife,” *Houston Informer*, July 11, 1959, 1; “Man’s Best Friend Came Between ‘Em,” *Houston Informer*, March 28, 1959, 1.
- ⁵³ “Commits Suicide After Slaying Divorced Wife,” *Houston Informer*, February 8, 1958, 1; “News Briefs,” *Houston Informer*, October 24, 1953, 1; “News Briefs,” *Houston Informer*, October 31, 1953, 10; “Mother-To-Be Beaten By Estranged Mate,” *Houston Informer*, July 11, 1959, 1; Ronald L. Jackson II, *Scripting the Black Masculine Body: Identity, Discourse, and Racial Politics in Popular Media* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2006). Masculinities are multiple, and the ways they are experienced, expressed, navigated, negotiated, and contested have everything to do with how a particular person is situated in his or her society by structures of race, gender, sexuality, class, ability, age, and so on. R. W. Connell explains that hegemonic masculinity is “the configuration of gender practice which embodies the currently accepted answer to the problem of legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees (or is taken to guarantee) the dominant position of men and the subordination of women.” So defined, masculinities do not exist prior to or outside of culture and they change with context. Hegemonic masculinity, then, must be interrogated in terms of its unstable relationship to feminine and masculine others in sociohistorical settings rather than as an object that is essential. Hegemonic masculinity, though it is deployed to guarantee the subjugation of women (and other men on the basis of race, class, body type, ability, and so on), is not the cause of gender inequality, but rather, as Mimi Schippers notes, is a “technology” and “rationale” through which society becomes organized by gender. Hegemonic masculinity is a symbol embedded in social institutions; it is a constitutive part of early twenty-first century gender ideology: “the values and beliefs that justify the gendered social order.” Throughout American history, persons in black bodies have been excluded from the possibility of approximating what is accepted at a given time as hegemonically masculine, and therefore have been compelled into other ways of being men, i.e., “black masculinities.” This results have been both destructive and constructive ways of being men in black communities. One such production is what is witnessed in the vignette involving Marion Wilson—an ardent rebellion against state surveillance and control for men who feel (and are, I would argue) strangled by the heavy-handed policing of American black men by government agencies that have long histories of disfranchising, economically exploiting, and over-criminalizing them. Connell, *Masculinities*, 76; Schippers, “Recovering the Feminine Other,” 93; Judith Lorber, *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 11. On black masculinities and their capacities for both harm and progressiveness, see Athena D. Mutua, *Progressive Black Masculinities?* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Bryant Keith Alexander, *Performing Black Masculinity: Race, Culture, and Queer Identity* (Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006); Patricia Hill Collins, “A Telling Difference: Dominance, Strength, and Black Masculinities,” in *Progressive Black Masculinities?* (New York: Routledge, 2012), 73–98; Mark Anthony Neal, *Looking for Leroy: Illegible Black Masculinities* (New York: New York University Press, 2013). On the histories of American black men and government surveillance and exploitation, see for example Derek Iwamoto, “Tupac Shakur: Understanding the Identity Formation of Hyper-Masculinity of a Popular Hip-Hop Artist,” *Black Scholar* 33 (2003): 44–49; Lydia Plath and Sergio Lussana, eds., *Black and White Masculinity in the American South, 1800–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009); Rod K. Brunson and Jody Miller, “Young Black Men and Urban Policing in the United States,” *British Journal of Criminology* 46, no. 4 (2006): 613–40; Darlene Clark Hine and Earnestine L. Jenkins, *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in U.S. Black Men’s History and Masculinity*, vol. 2: The 19th Century: From Emancipation to Jim Crow (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001); Paul Butler, “‘Do You Live in This Neighborhood?’” in *Twelve Angry Men: True Stories of Being a Black Man in America Today*, ed. Gregory Parks and Matthew W. Hughey (New York: New

Press, 2012), 111–24.

- ⁵⁴ “Woman Beaten,” *Houston Informer*, August 22, 1953, 20; “Whips Wife,” *Houston Informer*, May 26, 1951, 12; “Fires Into House,” *Houston Informer*, October 4, 1952, 20.
- ⁵⁵ “Man Stabbed During Fight With Wife,” *Houston Informer*, March 26, 1955, 22; “Crime Rundown,” *Houston Informer*, July 5, 1958, 10; “‘Hit And Run’ Man,” *Houston Informer*, June 27, 1959, 2; “Wife Shoots Mate After Fuss About ‘Other Woman,’” *Houston Informer*, August 4, 1956, 16.
- ⁵⁶ “Matrons Tell Of Attack By Two Men,” *Houston Informer*, June 25, 1955, 24; “Names Assailant,” *Houston Informer*, June 27, 1959, 2; “Modern Casanova,” *Houston Informer*, July 26, 1958, 1; “Third Warder Pistol Whips His Companion,” *Houston Informer*, July 13, 1957, 14.
- ⁵⁷ “Love Thy Neighbor,” *Houston Informer*, July 13, 1957, 10.
- ⁵⁸ Carter Wesley, “Ram’s Horn,” *Houston Informer*, December 5, 1953, 2.
- ⁵⁹ Mark M. Carroll, *Homesteads Ungovernable: Families, Sex, Race, and the Law in Frontier Texas, 1823–1860* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001); Paula J. Giddings, *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America* (New York: William Morrow, 1984), 31.
- ⁶⁰ Simon I. Singer, “The Fear of Reprisal and the Failure of Victims to Report a Personal Crime,” *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 4, no. 3 (1988): 289–302; Stacy L. Mallicoat and Connie Estrada Ireland, *Women and Crime: The Essentials* (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2013), 91; Christy A. Visser, “Gender, Police Arrest Decisions, and Notions of Chivalry,” *Criminology* 21, no. 1 (February 1, 1983): 5–28, doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1983.tb00248.x; Laura Dugan, Daniel S. Nagin, and Richard Rosenfeld, “Do Domestic Violence Services Save Lives?,” *National Institute of Justice Journal*, no. 250 (2003): 20–25; Evan Stark, “Race, Gender, and Woman Battering,” in *Violent Crime: Assessing Race and Ethnic Differences*, ed. Darnell F. Hawkins (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 184. As a result of these fears, many black women in Houston refused to file charges against their husbands and partners. See for example: “Must Have Been Angry,” *Houston Informer*, July 13, 1957, 1; “‘Off Beat,’” *Houston Informer*, June 28, 1958, 11; “3 Women Beaten on Same Day,” *Houston Informer*, August 22, 1953, 20. Negrophobia is an early-to-mid twentieth century term, often describing white people’s beliefs and anxieties around what they saw as an inherent link between blackness and criminality. More broadly, however, Negrophobia speaks to the ways white people concocted myths about black people and then both irrationally feared and hated them based on those myths. These beliefs compelled actions directed against black people such as lynchings and white flight from neighborhoods and schools, and today are often referred to under the umbrella of “anti-blackness.” However, I think Negrophobia is a more apt term for this work, not only because it is historically situated in the 1950s and is the word contemporaries would have used, but also because it implies, in my reading and in Gordon Hancock’s, that “the Negro” is a social construction of white people’s creation, and that the fear of black people is therefore in no way rooted in black people, forms of culture associated with blackness, or in the materiality of “blackness” as a color or phenotype. Rather, the fear is a manifestation of white imaginaries, desires, and anxieties, maintained through the magic of racecraft. Bauerlein, *Negrophobia*; Jody David Armour, *Negrophobia and Reasonable Racism: The Hidden Costs of Being Black in America* (New York: New York University Press, 1997); Gordon B. Hancock, “Attacking the Negro’s Morals,” *Houston Informer*, April 9, 1958, 10; Jordan, *White over Black*; George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971). On contemporary manifestations of Negrophobia in education, housing, and criminal justice, see the following examples Valerie A. Lewis, Michael O. Emerson, and Stephen L. Klineberg, “Who We’ll Live With: Neighborhood Racial Composition Preferences of Whites, Blacks and Latinos,” *Social Forces* 89, no. 4 (June 1, 2011): 1385–1407; William A. V. Clark, “Residential Preferences and Residential Choices in a Multiethnic Context,” *Demography* 29, no. 3 (August 1, 1992): 451–66, doi:10.2307/2061828; Saporito and Lareau, “School Selection as a Process”; Gail Williams O’Brien, *The Color of the Law: Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War II South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).
- ⁶¹ “Woman Charged In Shooting Of Husband,” *Houston Informer*, October 6, 1956, 1; “Shot in Arm,” *Houston Informer*, June 6, 1953, 1; “Woman Kills Ex-Mate As He Breaks In Her Home,” *Houston Informer*, June 13, 1959, 2; “Man Shot In Card Game Fray,” *Houston Informer*, December 26, 1959, 14. Additional

work, whether in Houston or elsewhere, should be completed to ascertain how often black women were convicted of these charges. For Houston, researchers would benefit from visiting the Harris County District Clerk's archives and provide the archivists there with each offender's name, the charge, and the approximate date of the offense. This will be an expensive endeavor, as the Clerk charges a \$5 search fee and "letter of disposition" fee for *each* search to obtain a case number. This fee is charged even if the Clerk's Office fails to find a case. From there, researchers can take prosecuted case numbers to the archive warehouse (no-billed cases will not have *any* documentation, save for the case name and disposition scribbled in a records book). Thus, at least for Harris County, the completion of this kind of research would be expensive and timely and may yield no results. None of the names that I submitted to the Clerk's Office yielded anything usable. Research on more recent times suggest what I would hypothesize: that black women were less likely to be granted leniency or reprieve for violent retaliation against their abusers than their white counterparts. One example from Houston was Charlie Richardson, who received a four-year sentence for murdering her husband, Joe D. Richardson, after the drunk man battered her. "Mate Axed in Love Triangle: Bloody, Butchered Body Found on Porch," *Houston Informer*, April 17, 1954, 1; "Ax-Murder Draws 4 Years In Pen," *Houston Informer*, August 7, 1954, 1. This was not always the case, of course. Ucie Fields received a five-year suspended sentence for killing her common-law husband after he attacked her. "Woman Gets 5-Yr. Suspended Sentence for Slaying Mate," *Houston Informer*, May 8, 1954, 1. Nevertheless, on the thoroughgoing vulnerability of black women in Negrophobic courts, see Sharon Angella Allard, "Rethinking Battered Woman Syndrome: A Black Feminist Perspective," *UCLA Women's Law Journal*, 1991, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/62z1s13j>.

⁶² "Grand Jury Gets Robinson Murder Case," *Houston Informer*, October 13, 1956, 1.

⁶³ Blair, *I've Got to Make My Livin'*, 11, 16; Mark Wild, *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), chap. 5; Kevin J. Mumford, *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the Early Twentieth Century* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997).

⁶⁴ Gross, *Colored Amazons*; Blair, *I've Got to Make My Livin'*; Mumford, *Interzones*; Hunter, *To Joy My Freedom*, 110–11; "Girl, 12, Tells Sordid Story," *Houston Informer*, December 24, 1955, 1. A similar argument prevails regarding black women in slavery. While it is obvious that black women's romantic relationships and marriages under slavery were demonstrations of the ways their humanity remained intact despite the ravages of the slave regime, I would agree with historian Gregory Smithers that black slave women's sexual activity was also coerced labor. Whether it was used to produce "increase" for the owner, or to manage emotions and desires among the slave population, slave owners benefited in material ways from black women labors. Gregory D. Smithers, *Slave Breeding: Sex, Violence, and Memory in African American History* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012).

⁶⁵ Brooks, Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation; Ira B. Bryant, Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas, interview by H. J. Walker, August 7, 1939; Freddie Collins, Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas, interview by H. J. Walker, August 6, 1939, Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services, Fondren Library, Rice University; crediting New York Public Library, Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature; C. T. Ewell, Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas, interview by H. J. Walker, August 1939; Jordan, *White over Black*.

⁶⁶ "Vice Squad Tip Nets Arrests in 'Sugar Hill Love Nest' Nabbing," *Houston Informer*, August 16, 1958, 1; Robinson, "Jet Visits Houston," 13; "Upper Sugarhill Residents Fight To Keep Area Exclusively Residential," *Houston Informer*, April 19, 1958, 1, 10; "Business Told To 'Quit' Sugarhill Site," *Houston Informer*, June 7, 1958, 1. Because "Sugar Hill" describes a geographic space that was tacitly understood but never formally described or plotted by black Houstonians, its particular boundaries are unclear and seem to have changed—specifically, expanded—over time, as lower-rent areas of Third Ward near TSU were bought and re-developed by wealthier black Houstonians during the middle of the twentieth century. However, based on the addresses marked whenever the *Informer* mentioned "Sugar Hill," it seems that in the 1950s the area included blocks bounded on the east by Hutchins Street, with a northern limit of Truxillo Street and a southern border of Wichita Street. The homes south of Texas Southern University, from Blodgett Street to Wichita Street were also included in Sugar Hill especially in the late 1950s, as middle class black Houstonians pressed southward toward Washington Terrace and Riverside Terrace. See

addresses, for example, in "Policemen Nab Policeman in Gambling Raid," *Houston Informer*, August 15, 1953, 1; "Fake NAACP Solicitor Arrested By State Police, Sheriff's Deputy," *Houston Informer*, December 15, 1956, 1, 8; "\$80,000 Bonds Set In Dope Cases Against Man, Woman," *Houston Informer*, August 3, 1957, 1; "Tip Pays Off In Sugar Hill Narcotic Raid," *Houston Informer*, December 14, 1957, 1, 10; "Man Shot by Wife on 'Sugar Hill,'" *Houston Informer*, n.d., 1; "Narcotic Officers 'Cleaning House' In Sugar Hill Area," *Houston Informer*, n.d., 1, 10.

⁶⁷ "Vice Squad Tip Nets Arrests in 'Sugar Hill Love Nest' Nabbing," 1, 10. For instances of black women being viewed as sexual targets by white men throughout the city, and namely in the neighborhoods listed above, see for example: "Woman Molested By White Man," *Houston Informer*, February 6, 1954, 1; "White Men Molest Women," *Houston Informer*, September 26, 1953, 1; "White Man Molests 8-Year-Old Girl," *Houston Informer*, November 28, 1953, 1; "Crime Rundown," 10; "GooGoo Eyes," *Houston Informer*, December 27, 1952, 1; "White Man's Immoral Acts in Front of Tot's Rile Parents," *Houston Informer*, March 26, 1955, 1.

⁶⁸ This topic is particularly fraught for a historical project, and not for want of more sophisticated theories of gender and sexuality, but rather because the language gender theorists use in the twenty-first century may not fully comport with the ways that people identified *themselves* in the 1950s. So, while in the paragraphs that follow I discuss individuals who I would imagine fit well into the category "transgender" today—a category that includes not just people who have or desire gender affirming surgeries, but also people who queer sex and gender in other ways—it remains an uncomfortable linguistic imposition on the past. While readers may engage in their own acts of interpretation with the sources and identify the women in this text as transgender, transwomen, or maybe even just trans, I avoid both "trans" and "cis," and simply mark them as they requested to be marked—as women without qualification, without scare quotes, and without hesitation. I would rather err for some confusion than subject these women to additional historical violence. Joanne Meyerowitz's history of transness as a cultural conception is instructive with regard to the destabilization of the notion of biological sex as it was challenged by understandings of gendered performance and performativity as being cultural rather than universal. Joanne Meyerowitz, *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009). For examples of various phrases used to describe women like those I discuss in this chapter, which included "boy-to-girl transformation," "cross-gender," and others, see: "Boy Turns Girl Puzzles Judges," *Afro-American*, December 25, 1965, 1; Dorothy Kilgallen, "Jottings in Pencil," *Record-Argus [Greenville, Pennsylvania]*, January 5, 1953, 4; "Sex of N.Y. Man Changed to Girl," *Capitol Times [Madison, Wisconsin]*, December 1, 1952, 1; "Former Soldier Changed To Girl By 'Medical Miracle,'" *The Times Record [Troy, New York]*, December 1, 1952, 1; Leon Racht, "Ex-GI Now Woman And Glad Of It; Stubble Still Gives Her Trouble," *Akron Beacon Journal*, December 1, 1952, 1; Walter C. Alvarez, "Boy-Girl Mixup at Hospital One of Nature's Most Cruel 'Gyps,'" *Houston Post*, February 6, 1958, sec. 5, 6. Also, on gender variance in history and in theory, see Sabine Lang, "Various Kinds of Two-Spirit People: Gender Variance and Homosexuality in Native American Communities," in *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, ed. Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997), 110–18; Kathleen M. Brown, "'Changed...Into the Fashion of a Man': The Politics of Sexual Difference in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Settlement," in *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South*, ed. Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 39–56; Sarah Haley, "'Like I Was a Man': Chain Gangs, Gender, and the Domestic Carceral Sphere in Jim Crow Georgia," *Signs* 39, no. 1 (September 2013): 53–77, doi:10.1086/670769; Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1999); Adam Isaiah Green, "Gay but Not Queer: Toward a Post-Queer Study of Sexuality," *Theory and Society* 31, no. 4 (August 1, 2002): 521–45; Viviane Namaste, "Undoing Theory: The 'Transgender Question' and the Epistemic Violence of Anglo-American Feminist Theory," *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 11–32; Janet Mock, *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More* (New York: Atria Books, 2014).

⁶⁹ George A. McElroy, "Female Impersonator Charged In Third Ward 'Mystery Death,'" *Houston Informer*, July 20, 1957, sec. 1, 1, 10.

⁷⁰ William S. Bush, "Part I The Path to the Texas Youth Council: Creating a Protective Umbrella for Juvenile Offenders," *Protecting Texas' Most Precious Resource: A History of Juvenile Justice Policy in Texas* (Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, 2008), i, ii, 2, 11, 14, <http://www.criminaljusticecoalition.org>; Robert Perkinson,

Texas Tough: The Rise of America's Prison Empire (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010), 253; Ted Winfield Brumbalow, "An Analysis of the Educational Program of the State Juvenile Training School" (M.A. Thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1937).

⁷¹ William S. Bush, *Who Gets a Childhood?: Race and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century Texas* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010), 63.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 195.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 193; "Martineau's Blast Draws Sharp Replies," *Corpus Christi Caller*, July 30, 1946. Historians and social scientists have documented the prevalence of sexual assault within prisons throughout the twentieth century. Some note that victims of rape in prisons and reformatories often exhibit negative changes in behavior following such assaults: their attempted suicide rates are higher, they become more violent, they become perpetrators of rape themselves. "National Prison Rape Elimination Commission Report," *Federal Sentencing Reporter* 24, no. 1 (October 1, 2011): 44–45, doi:10.1525/fsr.2011.24.1.44; Cheryl Bell et al., "Rape and Sexual Misconduct in the Prison System: Analyzing America's Most 'Open' Secret," *Yale Law & Policy Review* 18, no. 1 (January 1, 1999): 195–223; A. P. Drucker, *On the Trail of the Juvenile-Adult Offender: An Intensive Study of 100 County Jail Cases* (Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1912); Kelsey Kauffman, *Prison Officers and Their World* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988); Lee Sartain, *Borders of Equality: The NAACP and the Baltimore Civil Rights Struggle, 1914–1970* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013); Patterson and Conrad, *Scottsboro Boy*.

⁷⁴ McElroy, "Female Impersonator Charged In Third Ward 'Mystery Death,'" 1, 10.

⁷⁵ I. Arnon Bentovim and Bryn Williams, "Children and Adolescents: Victims Who Become Perpetrators," *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* 4 (1998): 101–7.

⁷⁶ Bush, *Who Gets a Childhood?*, 68.

⁷⁷ Despite Johnnie Mae's explicit request to be acknowledged as a woman, the *Informer* repeatedly referred to her as a man. However, on one occasion the newspaper referred to her as "Mrs Jordan," possibly a typo, but perhaps also telling of the way Johnnie Mae's gender identity confounded linguistic norms. See "'Johnnie Mae' To Go On Trial Mon For Killing," *Houston Informer*, November 30, 1957, sec. 1. Historian Douglas M. Charles notes that Americans remained generally unconcerned with same-gender-loving citizens, especially when we note that all of the national moral panics surrounding same-gender loving and sex came about after the mid-1930s. Douglas M. Charles, *Hoover's War on Gays: Exposing the FBI's "Sex Deviates" Program* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015).

⁷⁸ McElroy, "Female Impersonator Charged In Third Ward 'Mystery Death,'" 1, 10; "'Johnnie Mae' To Go On Trial Mon For Killing," 1, 8.

⁷⁹ Because Mills's own declaration of zir's gender identity was not revealed in the sources, I opt to use gender neutral pronouns and avoid referring to Mills as either a man or a woman except when quoting directly from the sources.

⁸⁰ "Impersonator Was A Quiet Neighbor, Says Female Tenant," *Houston Informer*, October 24, 1959, 1, 10.

⁸¹ I encourage historians who intend to cite this story to seek out the sources I have used as evidence. I rely on an uneasy marriage of primary and secondary sources that do not immediately lend themselves to Mills's voice and perspective. Additionally, as I prepare this dissertation manuscript for final submission, I have received, after nearly nine months of waiting, case documents from the Houston Police Department. I have begun to read through and interpret them, and I can already attest that they are rich and offer compelling insight into the lives of genderqueer people and black women sex workers in Houston in the 1950s. Though I see no major contradictions in what these documents describe with the narrative I have heretofore been able to construct, I can also now see several gaps that were not apparent before. That is, I encourage scholars to help me reconstruct this story, which stands to teach us a great deal about Houston's interracial sex market, the gender and sexual practices on the margins of a heteronormative society, and the sexualized criminalization of spaces like Third Ward.

⁸² Martin Van Dyke, "Masquerade," *Official Detective Stories*, April 1960, 44–45; J. E. Clarke and Joseph A. Jachimczyk, "Autopsy Report Case 59-1310 Pathological Diagnosis on the Body of Billy Celton Mahaffey,"

October 18, 1959, Harris County Archives; "Dying Stab Victim's Car Hops Curb, Hits Truck," *Houston Post*, October 18, 1959, Harris County Archives; "Dress Wearer Admits Stabbing," *Houston Press*, October 20, 1959, Harris County Archives; "Stabbing Admitted By Porter," *Houston Post*, October 20, 1959, Harris County Archives.

⁸³ Van Dyke, "Masquerade," 45.

⁸⁴ I believe this woman was Rosezella Butler, thirty-three-year-old resident of 820 Delano Street on the northern edge of Third Ward. I intend to say more about Ms. Butler in a future iteration of this project. Rosezella Butler, "[Signed Statement]," October 20, 1959, Mahaffey, Billy C. Murder, Houston Police Department Open Records Unit.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 46; "Man With Stab Wound Crashes, Dies," *Houston Chronicle*, October 18, 1959, Harris County Archives; "Woman Admits Scuffle, Denies Stabbing Driver," *Houston Chronicle*, October 19, 1959, Harris County Archives.

⁸⁶ "Impersonator Was A Quiet Neighbor, Says Female Tenant," 1, 10; "Houston Man Killed By Date Dressed As A Woman," *Jet*, November 5, 1959, 48; "Man Admits Slaying During Knife Struggle," *Houston Chronicle*, October 20, 1959, Harris County Archives; Mahaffey v. Official Detective Stories, Inc., 210 F. Supp. 251 (U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana 1962). Researchers have found, for example, that when trans-identified persons are murdered, media outlets often present—about 67% of the time—an apologetic for the assailant, wherein the trans* person's "trickery" becomes the action responsible for precipitating the killing. Kristen Schilt and Laurel Westbrook, "Doing Gender, Doing Heteronormativity: 'Gender Normals,' Transgender People, and the Social Maintenance of Heterosexuality," *Gender and Society* 23, no. 4 (2009): 440–64.

⁸⁷ "Police Brutality Again," 13; "Editorially Speaking: Senseless Police Brutality," 2.

⁸⁸ "Law Enforcement," *Houston Informer*, January 12, 1952, sec. 2, 2; "Complaints Aired," *Houston Post*, June 14, 1950, sec. 1, 7; "Police Brutality Claim May Idle 200 Taxicab Drivers on Monday," *Houston Post*, June 11, 1950, sec. 1, 1, 14; "6 Arrested In Anti-Red Campaign," *Houston Post*, July 16, 1950, sec. 1, 1, 13; "Policeman Is Jailed In Call Girl Expose," *Houston Post*, October 6, 1950, sec. 1, 1, 7; "Suspension Urged," *Houston Post*, August 9, 1952, sec. 2, 10; "Mistreatment In 2 Cases Charged," *Houston Post*, October 6, 1953, sec. 1, 3; "Chief Ousts Pair," *Houston Post*, October 7, 1953, sec. 1, 10; "Lt Davidson Suspended 5 Days; Struck Prisoner," *Houston Post*, July 9, 1955, sec. 1, 3; "Patrolman Suspended For Slapping Boy of 13," *Houston Post*, June 20, 1957, sec. 1, 1. Some white Houstonians also urged the criminalization of "Latin" spaces as well, believing police should target any groups of three or more Mexicans or Mexican Americans. D. D. Peck to B. W. Payne, March 20, 1950, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History; crediting Houston Metropolitan Research Center at Houston Public Library, Houston, Texas, <https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph250057/m1/1/>.

⁸⁹ "Law Enforcement," 2.

⁹⁰ Watson, *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990*, 3.

⁹¹ "The Case Against Policeman," *Houston Informer*, March 8, 1952, sec. 2, 2.

⁹² Carter Wesley, "Kern Acts Babyish," *Houston Informer*, March 8, 1952, sec. 1, 2.

⁹³ Carter Wesley, "Police On Defensive," *Houston Informer*, June 26, 1954, sec. 1, 2; "HCCO Agrees; We Need A New Police Commissioner," *Houston Informer*, August 14, 1954, sec. 1, 12; "Police Chief, Mayor's Asst. Speak At HCCO Meeting," *Houston Informer*, October 2, 1954, sec. 1, 1, 10; "Local Citizens Express Views On Mayor's Plan," *Houston Informer*, August 21, 1954, sec. 1, 1; Wesley, "Police On Defensive," 2.

⁹⁴ "Neal Frazier Case Group Wants Mayor To Discuss 'Cop Brutality,'" *Houston Informer*, March 28, 1959, 1, 12; "Cop Brutality Victim Better," *Houston Informer*, April 4, 1959, 20.

CHAPTER 6: “A MORNING OF UNBELIEVABLE HORROR”: THE POLICE SIEGE ON TEXAS SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

During the early morning hours of May 17, 1967, Houston police officers rampaged through the three men’s dormitories at the center of Texas Southern University’s (TSU) majority black campus. Under the order of Chief Herman Short, hundreds of officers fired at least two thousand gunshots toward and into the dorms before bursting through the doors in riot gear with high-powered rifles and growling dogs in tow. They found undergraduate Fred Freeny inside one building and hit him two times with the butt of a shotgun in his ribs. A “trembling” young officer pressed a shotgun against Harold R. Hicks’ stomach, saying, “If you move I’ll blow your ‘got damn’ guts out.” Carlin Riley required stitches for the wound on his head and William Glaze had to recover from the dog bites on his hips. Morris L. English ended up with a doctor’s bill of \$105.50 and an ambulance fee of \$25, a total of about \$940 today. Marcus E. Alford was called a “nigger” and a “bastard,” and Charles E. Criner only barely missed being defenestrated through broken glass. Against odds, however, the officers failed to kill any students.¹

The violence at TSU was not inevitable, though it was also not unfathomable given the history of the institution and the police department’s pattern of undisciplined and unrestrained brutality against black Houstonians. According to TSU’s Dean of Law Kenneth S. Tollett, the majority-black institution was “born in sin.” TSU had only become state-assisted in 1948, after the Texas legislature was forced to recognize that there was no separate-but-equal school for black Texans to attend that rivaled the University of Texas.

Conflicts between TSU's first president, Dr. Raphael O'Hara Lanier, and its Board of Regents, appointed by Governor Allan Shivers, characterized its initial years of operation. Like other predominantly residential spaces in the city, TSU was designed as a black space, and suffered from similar forms of neglect and abuse. The school necessarily offered remedial courses because its pool of applicants largely consisted of students who had suffered "poor education... in segregated Negro public schools." State money was hard to come by. "There are no counselors for the dormitories, the dean of men doubles as the dean of student life," one reporter noted. An English faculty member admitted, "Much of TSU is veneer." The library was "ill-equipped" for research, and "many of the courses listed and described in the catalogue year after year" were never actually offered. Though Carter Wesley had great hopes for the institution at its founding and bitterly disagreed with Thurgood Marshall and Lulu B. White about its worth, by 1953 he concluded that TSU was "not... a Negro school, but one dominated by whites, for the interests of whites, and contrary and against the interests of Negroes."²

In the early months of 1960, TSU students began challenging the status of their institution as a space for white governance. Following the example set by young civil rights activists who participated in sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina and in other southern cities that had become notorious for brutality toward black protesters, TSU students began staging their own demonstrations in Houston. Against the wishes of businesspeople, black and white, undergraduates loudly contested segregation at Houston's cafeterias and train station. In response to TSU's increasing visibility as an activist space over the course of the 1960s, Chief Short assured white Houstonians that his department was "ready for 'anything the Negro community can throw at them.'" He placed the "TSU campus... under surveillance by plain clothesmen often, as many as several hundred." That number was likely

an exaggeration given the size and color of the Houston police force, though police spies definitely did work on campus to provide intelligence on student activism. That is, though legislators had intended to construct TSU as a space to inspire black people's acquiescence to the Jim Crow status quo, it had become—for some students—a space in which to organize and out of which to challenge white oppression. Short and his police force attempted to stymie that growing trend by intimidating student leaders and using excessive force at sites of civil protest.³

The students at Texas Southern University felt this white supremacist gaze on their campus, and chief among their demands to the city and the University administration was a request for the disarmament of campus security officers and an end to unwarranted city police surveillance of students. Many of TSU's students had remained uninterested in these demands until the morning after May 16th. They were hardened liberal individualists, like most Americans. However, they realized a chink in the armor of their ideology when they faced a barrage of bullets from an army of police officers who saw them as threats to white power. Perhaps bright-eyed and optimistic about the nation's future, students learned that merely being within black spaces could be enough to mark them as criminals. Simply being present criminalized even the white students on campus.⁴

Segregation and the criminalization of race and space thereby precipitated one of the most heinous acts of mass police brutality in Houston's history. As criminalized subjects, students found themselves treated as less than human—both interpersonally and legally. Their experiences leading up to May 16th exhibited the ways the criminalization of space hinged on racialization, state negligence, and state abuse. Some black Houstonians attempted to ameliorate that negligence and abuse through protest. Over the early weeks of May 1967, such attempts took place on TSU's campus, as well as the Holmes Road

incinerator in Sunnyside, and the newly-integrated Northwood Junior High School in north Houston. The city's responses to each of these protests and the communities wherein they took place exacerbated the distrust between black Houstonians and municipal officials. The city's non-black press, unsympathetic to the grievances of black folks, encouraged readers to see protesters as criminals, and TSU students and Friends of the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) as particularly dangerous. These images confirmed, for white people predisposed to accepting them as truth, that black people and their spaces were dangerous and in need of containment.⁵

The assault on TSU students was an act of terrorism in the service of white supremacy. In this way, despite its reputation otherwise, Houston was not unlike other southern cities that failed to desegregate peacefully. As one observer noted, "There was a reason for the show of force at TSU. The city administration was determined to demonstrate its ability to utterly crush any attempt by Negroes in the city of Houston to express their discontent." Student testimonies exposed the severity of police negligence and violence toward them as residents of a criminalized space—a historically black campus that officers had been watching, occupying, and antagonizing for weeks. The violence at TSU represented a crisis for the city of Houston, which had for decades lauded itself as an exceptional city of racial progressivism. It highlighted the prevailing issue of residential and educational segregation and explicitly demonstrated the ways the racialization and criminalization of space could justify the continued "containment" of black people in a society where liberal individualism was coming to prevail over Jim Crowism.⁶

Texas Southern University began as a teacher's college in 1925 as an extension of Wiley College. For the first academic year, students attended classes at Colored High School on San Felipe Street in Fourth Ward. In fall 1926, classes moved to Jack Yates High School on Elgin Street in Third Ward to accommodate increasing interest in the training. The following year the Houston Public School Board provided funds to develop a segregated junior college system, providing a loan of \$2,800 to help black Houstonians establish Houston Colored Junior College. By 1931, the growing institution received accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges, and in 1934 the Houston School Board transitioned the junior college into a four-year institution, now named Houston College for Negroes. In need of a larger campus to accommodate its growing undergraduate body, consisting of about 1,400 students, and its new graduate program that was established in 1943, the college undertook a fundraising campaign. Mamie Fairchild, Third Ward resident, college graduate, and the widow of Watchtower Life Insurance Company founder Thornton McNair Fairchild, contributed to the building fund, which the school honored by naming its first building after her late husband. Anna and Clarence Dupree were also among the "prime contributors" for the first permanent building for the Houston College for Negroes, giving \$11,000 to the project in 1946, one year after the Houston School Board ended its governing relationship with the school.⁷

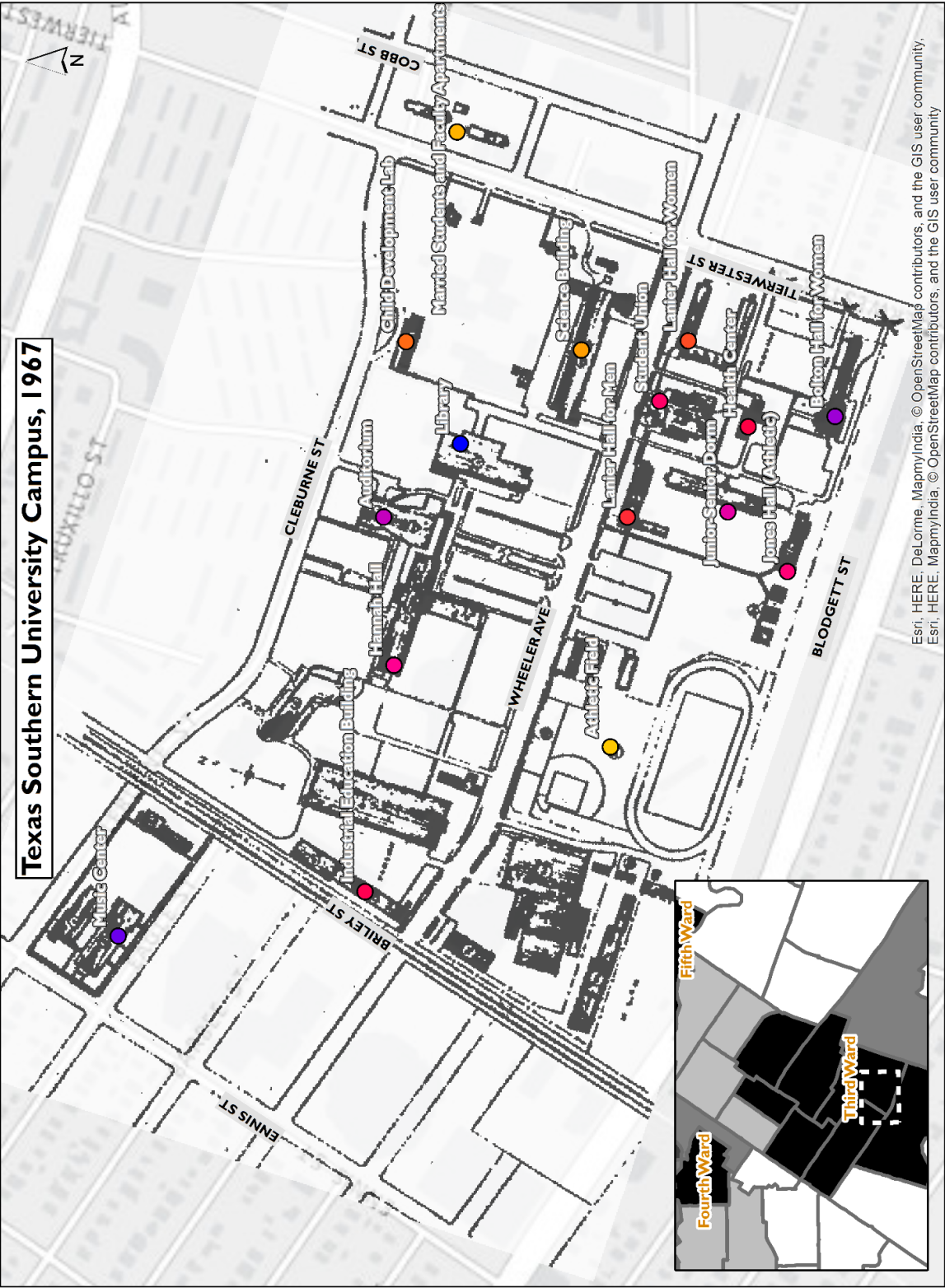
Following Heman Sweatt's legal challenge to the University of Texas for admission into its law school, in March 1947 Texas legislators introduced several bills "providing for the establishment, support, maintenance, and direction of a University of the first class for the instruction and training of the colored people of this State to be known as 'The Texas State University for Negroes' [TSUN] and to be located in Houston, Harris County." In 1951, the House passed representative John Bell Murphy's bill to remove "for Negroes"

from the name of the institution in response to requests made by “a delegation of students who went to Austin to petition” for the name change. That same legislation changed the school’s name to Texas Southern University. The legislature’s efforts to maintain segregation by showing good faith toward the *Plessy* separate-but-equal standard helped catapult TSU into what some accepted as “the best Black institution of higher learning west of the Mississippi”—an increasingly attractive and perennially growing school of higher learning for black Texans. In 1947, over two thousand students enrolled to attend the schools of Vocational and Industrial Education; Law, Arts and Sciences; or Pharmacy under the leadership of the University’s first president, Dr. Raphael O’Hara Lanier.⁸

By 1966, TSU had built a walkable and compact campus out of what had formerly been pine forest (see Map 18). Bifurcated by Wheeler Avenue from east to west, academic buildings occupied the northern half of the campus and student housing and athletic accommodations the southern half. Most buildings were situated between Briley Street to the west and Tierwester Street to the east. Hannah Hall, the administration building, sat at the center of the main academic quad, flanked to the east by the school auditorium and the campus library. The massive science building stretched the remainder of the way toward Tierwester. What eventually became Lanier Hall Women’s Dormitory sat on the south side of Wheeler and at the corner of Tierwester. Bolton Hall for Women stood just further south at the corner of Blodgett and Tierwester. As was true at other black institutions, women at TSU “had to contend with... traditional views of gender roles,” and suffered a 9:00 curfew. The women’s dormitories were separated from the men’s by the Student Health Center and the Student Union, a popular meeting place for residents and commuters alike. Lanier Men’s Dormitory and the Junior-Senior Men’s Dormitory stood just to the west of these. Jones Hall, the dorm for male athletes, stood just south of the men’s dorms

as did three cottages. A baseball diamond, track and football field, and Athletic Department were plotted west of these dorms between Wheeler and Blodgett and stretching to Briley Street. A fence along Blodgett Street and the southern portion of Tierwester kept the campus separated from the middle class homes south of the University. Another fence along Cleburne Street marked the campus as separate from the low-income Cuney Homes public housing project on the campus's northern edge. Most often, then, people entered campus from the east and west through Wheeler Street. This remarkable growth within just twelve years reflected the efforts of campus administrators who, despite recognizing that TSU had been founded as a Jim Crow institution, believed it could be used in the interest of black Americans.⁹

Prior to his arrival in Houston, Lanier had been the Dean of Faculty at Hampton Institute (now Hampton University), dean at Florida A&M University, special assistant in the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, and U.S. Minister to Liberia under President Harry Truman in 1946. Historian MaryBeth Rogers notes that Lanier “was easily recognizable as one of [the] Talented Tenth,” having completed graduate work at Stanford University and postdoctoral studies at Columbia University and Harvard University. He was also known and respected among black Houstonians, having served as dean of Houston College for Negroes during the Great Depression. Despite his remarkable educational and professional pedigree, Lanier still managed to “amaze” psychologists at the segregated University of Houston when, as the only black person submitted to their experiment, he “scor[ed] 3,000 words a minute in a remedial reading test” and “exceeded that of any person tested at the University” in 1954. Most black Houstonians who had an opinion about Lanier, then, looked upon him as a symbol of racial pride and welcomed his leadership at the University.¹⁰



Map 18 The campus plan for Texas Southern University as it stood in 1967 georeferenced over an updated street map of Third Ward.

Throughout Lanier's tenure as president, historian Gary M. Lavergne notes that the legislature only "grudgingly appropriated funds to keep TSUN running in order to keep the University of Texas white," refusing to provide Lanier with a budget to meet their supposed goal to establish a "first class" institution for the state's black residents.¹¹ The president also suffered repeated attacks by the University's Board of Regents in 1953. Board member Ralph Lee, "an avowed and bitter Dixiecrat" according to Carter Wesley, claimed Lanier was "incompetent, cannot stick to decisions, is negligent, insubordinate to the board, and... some of his actions are not in accordance with good American principles." Among other grievances, Lee opposed Lanier's failure to notify faculty of their re-employment until two weeks prior to the start of the 1953-1954 academic year. Claudius William Rice, the owner of *Negro Labor News*, based in Houston, also openly expressed his distaste for Lanier's governance. Rice and J. D. Moore, a local activist and minister, claimed that Lanier had lost control of the student body—that they had become unmanageable in the spring semester of 1953. The *Chronicle*, which had been unfriendly toward Lanier since his arrival, amplified complaints against the president, writing that the campus had exploded after a faculty committee refused to allow the school auditorium to be used for a public discussion about Whittaker Chambers' *The Witness*.¹²

Lanier responded to Rice's personal attacks by noting that he and Rice had worked well together when the former had been dean at Houston College for Negroes because as dean he had been able to use his influence to Rice's benefit. However, after Rice failed in his bid to be chosen for the Board of Regents at TSU, he began printing damaging op-eds on the University president. The newspaper editor, Lanier claimed, "will print anything he is paid to print." Like the *Chronicle*, Rice was "out to embarrass him [Lanier] at every opportunity." Carter Wesley, Sid Hilliard, and Claude A. Barnett of the Associated Negro

Press used their ink to preserve Lanier's reputation. Barnett implored Lanier to send him any updates on the politics surrounding his presidency, believing that "[p]lenty of misinformation can be spread about merely because those who know the truth do not present that side."¹³

Barnett also wrote directly to Ben Hawkins, the staff writer at the *Chronicle* who had written about the "unwholesome situation" of student protesters on campus. Sparing no words, he called the article "both misleading and wholly exaggerated" and lambasted the reporter for having no real interest in "pav[ing] the way for a greater and more progressive Texas Southern." He claimed, "The *Chronicle* and *Labor News* are deliberately creating insignificant and petty situations, so as to confuse the Citizenry, spread distrust among students and faculty, and to elevate this unfortunate situation to such a high and depressing state until the President resigns to disgust" and pointed out that they had done all this without having once "proved nor attempted to prove" their "allegations." Despite Rice's and the *Chronicle*'s efforts to "destroy" the president and whispers in both papers that Lanier was a communist in both newspapers, by Wesley's estimation, most black Houstonians remained strong supporters of the president. Sid Hilliard's Harris County Council of Organizations (HCCO) and its forty clubs and groups "sent letter[s] of endorsement to the board of TSU, to Governor [Allan] Shivers, and to the local press" testifying that Lanier had "served [black Houstonians] faithfully and well and enjoys a rare bit of trust and confidence here and throughout the state as a leader." Indeed, Wesley argued, the legislature's tepid establishment of TSUN in 1947 would have met with greater resistance from black Houstonians if they had not hired Lanier, whose reputation and credentials commanded respect from white people and fostered admiration among black

people. Wesley suggested the Board “stop paying any attention to Rice’s cackling, because he is just eaten up with hatred of Lanier.”¹⁴

In fact, despite protests otherwise and inadequate funding from the state, which the *Informer* believed would ultimately result in TSU’s demise, Lanier boasted several accomplishments as president. Under his leadership the University was “recognized as a Class A institution by the Texas Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools,” its Art program was regionally ranked, and its profile had grown among higher education professional associations. Students took ownership of the campus, literally taxing themselves in order to build a Student Union.¹⁵ The football program had advanced and was winning conference and national championships. Enrollment had tripled since 1947. And in further defense of their president, in the first week of June 1953 student government leaders also testified in letters to the Board of Regents that “there is no unrest or dissension” on campus and indicated their “full support of the actions of the president, Dr. R. O’Hara Lanier....”¹⁶

Nevertheless, on June 8, 1953, the *Chronicle*’s Ben Hawkins reported that Governor Shivers had ordered a probe into TSU’s affairs after the local American Legion “Negro post” requested that he make an “impartial investigation of conditions” at the University. Hawkins noted that the “campus has been the center of reports of faculty unrest and fear, plotting, and inefficient management” and cited multiple instances of students picketing downtown and on campus and multiple faculty “resigning in disgust.” The next day, however, the *Chronicle* reported that according to Board chair Mack Hannah, a successful black entrepreneur out of Port Arthur, Shivers had not yet ordered an investigation into the school. The governor did eventually order the requested probe in July, which would turn out to be both a waste of time and money.¹⁷

Nation's Press Alerts Country Over TSU Mess

Following Is Typical Headline Reactions

JAIL PHONY TSU PROFESSOR

Police Nab Fake TSU Professor

Dr. Lanier Fails To Mention Red Front Post In Loyalty Oath

Dr. Lanier Fails to Explain or Deny His Affiliation with Communist Group in Oath As Required by Law as of April 10, 1953.

HOUSTON, TEXAS, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16, 1953

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Indict Former T. S. U. 'Prof' for Theft

2 Nab Fake TSU Prof. In Chicago

What Is Status of TSU Graduates Hadley Simmons Taught

One of the questions that the Defender would like to see the Board of Directors settle in their investigation of Texas Southern University is the status of the graduates of the institution who took work for credit under Hadley H. Simmons, who was exposed teaching using fraudulent degrees.

THE HOUSTON DEFENDER

SATURDAY, JULY 25, 1953

Dr. Lanier Linked With Red Web Over Washington

Dr. R. O'Hara Lanier, president of Texas Southern University has worked in three top government organizations named by the Jettie Steele Internal Security Committee in the United States Senate in its report on Communist activities in the U. S. Government.

THE NEGRO LABOR NEWS SATURDAY SEPT. 5, 1953

Over 75 TSU Teachers, Deans Fired, Demoted Or Resigned Under Lanier

By C. W. Rice

State and Congressional Committees Probing Communism in Colleges Should Include Texas Southern University

THE NEGRO LABOR NEWS SATURDAY MAY 24, 1953

BY C. W. RICE

The Controversy Between The Labor News And Texas Southern University's President Is Not A Personal Issue

EVERY CITIZEN IN HOUSTON AND TEXAS WILL BE VITALLY AFFECTED BY OUTCOME OF THIS VITAL ISSUE.

THE NEGRO LABOR NEWS SATURDAY MAY 24, 1953

T.S.U. Rocked by Mounting Discords

T. S. U. Book Review Ban Brings Uproar

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

American Legion Demands T. S. U. Probe

Committee Named To Investigate

Communist Teaching At TSU

THE HOUSTON DEFENDER SATURDAY, JULY 4, 1953

CHRONICLE FRIDAY, JULY 10, 1953 A 7

Wrecked Lanier Car May Figure in Probe

SUNDAY, JULY 12, 1953

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Instructor at T.S.U. Resigns, Charging 'Fear and Confusion'

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

HOUSTON, TEXAS, SUNDAY, AUGUST 23, 1953

T. S. U. Directors Ignored Evidence on Lanier

THE NEGRO LABOR NEWS

Ban On American History At T. S. U. To Be Brought Before State American Legionnaires

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE

HOUSTON, TEXAS, TUESDAY, AUGUST 4, 1953

T. S. U. Board Denies President's Charge

T. S. U. 'Prof' Is Exposed as Fake

SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1953

THE HOUSTON POST

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, MAY 17, 1953

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

THE HOUSTON POST

T. S. U. Work Lashed By Auditor

Business management of Texas Southern University as Houston should be improved or separated from the president's office, State Auditor C. H. Carney reported.

University trustees met Monday, The Chronicle reported.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Carney's report sharply criticized Lanier's handling of the university's financial affairs.

Carney said he will have a report on the audit by the end of the month.

He is happy to give you a full statement as soon as he has the report, Doctor Lanier told a reporter.

Following the early June articles, Wesley immediately tackled the *Chronicle's* efforts to signal TSU as a dangerous space. In an editorial he titled "Conspiracies?" he asked whether there existed "a plan or a design by somebody to kill off TSU?" "Or," he asked "is the plan or design to kill Lanier, with a willingness to kill the school to get Lanier?" He charged that the *Chronicle* had no evidence to back up its claims against the University president or the student body, attacks that it had been "regularly... hauling" at the institution "since 1949." The *Chronicle's* efforts to keep the attention of Governor Shivers and its desire to crack down on "any grave or dangerous unrest" ignored, in Wesley's opinion, that the only threat that existed at Texas Southern was its mostly white Board of Regents—composed of five white and four black members. Indeed, the Board had been established by the Texas legislature and individually appointed by the governor as a failsafe to maintain control of the state-funded institution. Wesley concluded that any inefficiency on campus was the result of the Board's auditor's decision to take the financial office from the president's administration and institute "dual control," making all financial decisions subject to Board input and approval.¹⁸ Wesley's frustration with the *Chronicle's* attempts to defame TSU and the Board of Regents' constant rebuttals of Lanier's administrative and financial efforts led him to suggest out loud:

I am beginning to think that it may be time for Negroes, who have been trying to go along with the establishment of TSU, to take up arms against the sea of troubles and by opposing them thus end them, or push them out in the open so we can see some heads and tails of them. Why don't we join the NAACP and others who have been against TSU from the start, and put up the means to file a series of suits to enter the undergraduate schools of the University of Texas, on the ground that TSU has been made untenable and impossible for ever serving the Negro interests?¹⁹

Wesley's patience had worn thin. The conflict over Lanier's administration had demonstrated for him, without any room for doubt, that as a space built in the interest of

white people and despite the best efforts of Lanier, his faculty, and his staff to transform it, TSU was another manifestation of white supremacy.²⁰

In the early summer of 1953, a special board of investigators began “probing the state of affairs at TSU,” assessing whether claims of administrative incompetence, poor records-keeping, and retaliation against faculty members were evident. Twenty-five-year-old law student and war veteran Booker T. Bonner testified that several instructors had been let go for failing to be “yes men” and that students were often kept ignorant of the school’s financial state. But he still supported Lanier, noting, “[He] is a pretty good man as far as I’m concerned.” Indeed, most students seemed to appreciate “the Lanier administration, because the head of the school is a ‘student’s president.’” Lanier “tries to get everything the students want and need” a faculty spokesperson confirmed. Faculty members testified that there was “no general unrest” among them, but believed they should not be submitted to the insecurity of annual unemployment and argued that a tenure system needed to be introduced at the school. State auditor C. S. Niebuhr found that personnel files “were once ‘in a pretty bad shape,’ but that ‘progress [was] being made in correcting the situation.’” Investigators concluded that the Lanier administration was neither negligent nor incompetent, and that each of the claims that had been leveled against TSU were unsubstantiated. Learning that “there is no unrest or turmoil,” the Board accepted the investigation committee’s report, which stated, “We want to emphasize that we find absolutely nothing evidencing any subversive or communistic affiliation or association by the administration and find no evidence of any subversive or communistic teaching at the University.” Dr. Lanier’s administration, the *Informer* said in its interpretation of the report, “was above reproach.”²¹

Despite this vindication, Lanier only remained at the institution for two more academic years, tendering his resignation on June 8, 1955. The announcement by the Board of Regents hit black Houstonians invested in TSU “like a bomb, with stunning impact.” Citizens across the city speculated “the reason behind the resignation,” since there had been no public indication of any further dissatisfaction with Lanier’s administration. Nevertheless, after a “secret session” meeting among Board members, from which Lanier was excluded, he allegedly asked to resign, and they “immediately and unanimously” approved, offering him thirty days to vacate his University residence. Rumors of a conspiracy of subterfuge among two or three faculty members, the Board, and Dr. Joseph Pierce, who replaced Lanier as acting president, quickly spread. Claude Barnett sent a personal note, expressing his shock and wondering if Lanier might share an account of why he resigned to the press, but also praising him because “[t]hat Texas mustang was a tough horse to ride but it appeared you had tamed her.” By July, black Houstonians had still failed to learn why Lanier had resigned and his family had migrated from Houston to Miami, leaving leaders like Lulu B. White uncertain about whether the fight with the effectively white Board and their interests had ever truly been resolved.²²

The Board approved Dr. Samuel Milton Nabrit as TSU’s second president on July 13, 1955. Immediately after Nabrit’s hiring, however, Houstonians expressed skepticism that he would have any more success than his predecessor had. “What chance,” they asked “has President Nabrit if [the] Board meddles?”²³ Like Lanier, Nabrit had a formidable resume. He had been born into a large family with a seemingly insatiable collective desire for academic achievement.²⁴ Like his parents and siblings, Samuel Nabrit fashioned a life of academic and professional prestige. He completed his undergraduate education at Morehouse College in 1925 as “one of the first five bachelors of science” recipients from the institution. That

summer, he enrolled at the University of Chicago, taking courses there for two summers while working as head of Morehouse's biology department during the academic year. In 1932, after taking some time off to care for his sick wife, Constance Crocker, class of 1925 valedictorian of Boston University, Samuel Nabrit became the first black person to receive a Ph.D. at Brown University, completing his studies in biology. He was also the first Morehouse alumnus to have received a Ph.D. anywhere. Working as a researcher in the northeast, the newly minted Dr. Nabrit earned a reputation as a bright biologist. In 1944, he studied at Columbia University's Teacher College, in 1946 he and several colleagues established the National Institute of Science, in 1947 Atlanta University recruited him to become the first dean of its graduate school, and in 1948 he joined the Carnegie Foundation Faculty Grant-in-Aid Program. His teaching and research took him to New York, Texas, Belgium, and the Virgin Islands before finally landing him at TSU.²⁵

In his early years as president of TSU, Nabrit focused on raising funds by building relationships with Houston's business class and on increasing the academic profile of the University. Six months after Nabrit's arrival, the Board of Regents voted to desegregate Texas Southern, and in the fall of 1956 the University admitted its first white students, though none enrolled at least until 1958. However, by the time of Nabrit's resignation in 1966—he left to accept President Lyndon B. Johnson's nomination for him to join the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission—the University had just over 200 white students enrolled, about 5 percent of its student body. Nabrit believed that desegregation presented a challenge to formerly all-black institutions. White students enjoyed the advantages of well-funded schools and updated materials for generations, and these circumstances yielded positive educational outcomes. Many black students did not enter college as prepared for advanced studies. "This illustrates the tragic fact," he wrote, "that due to economic and

cultural differences which stem from dualism [i.e., “separate but equal” segregation], the average Negro cannot compete on equal terms with the average white student in our society.” In order to contend in the age of desegregation, schools like TSU had to learn to do more than compensate for the detrimental effects of “dualism” on black students. Nabrit therefore established a “‘rather rigorous’ freshman program” that functioned to “weed out a large percentage of those who enter first year.” Additionally, as a trained scientist, he focused his attention on improving the science programs, and boasted at the time of his resignation that “biology and chemistry” were the strongest fields at TSU and that, “If all Negro colleges in America were taken into consideration, Texas Southern would not be lower than sixth by anyone’s ranking.” Like Lanier, Nabrit contested what he felt was the Board of Regents’ undue power in handling University affairs throughout his time as president, but his relationship was much less fractious ²⁶

Indeed, in 1960, when TSU students joined the student protest movement that was building up in cities across the country, Nabrit supported them with the tacit blessing of Mack Hannah, who quietly helped bankroll the student activists. The student protest movement in Houston began after police attacked Eldrewey Joseph Stearns, native Galvestonian, Michigan State University graduate, and law student at TSU in August 1959. The twenty-seven-year-old aspiring attorney was driving from his job as a waiter at the Houston Doctor’s Club when he was stopped by city police for a traffic violation. Instead of finding a driver’s license in his wallet, the officers found a photograph of a white woman with whom Stearns had been friends at Michigan State. Stearns suffered multiple beatings in police custody that night. However, dressed in “a suit, a bow tie, a shirt with French cuffs” and wearing “facial bruises,” Stearns attended the next city council meeting to air his grievances against the Houston Police Department, claiming that officers abused him and

“repeatedly” referred to him as a “nigger.” An investigation cleared the officers of any wrongdoing, but Stearns became a cause célèbre on campus.²⁷

Angry students recruited Stearns as the leader of a protest movement in Houston inspired by those in Greensboro, North Carolina. Quentin Mease, head of the South Central YMCA at 3531 Wheeler Avenue in Third Ward, hired Stearns in February of 1960 after he lost his job at the all-white Doctor’s Club as a result of the publicity he garnered following his city council appearance. Through Mease, Stearns’ social network grew to include a black business class that had long deferred to the now waning Houston NAACP on matters of desegregation. On campus that same month, the Baptist Student Union brought “restless students” together who were inspired by Stearns and “bothered” by the lack of protest activity in the city. One student, Earl Allen, noted of the group, “The notion of complacency and docility—that’s just not where many of us were.” William “Bill” Lawson, a young minister, arrived on that late night in March to find a large group of students waiting for him at the Union. They were going to protest, and they hoped to have an adult leader who could teach them non-violent civil disobedience.²⁸

Lawson had come to Houston in 1955 after completing his Master of Theology degree from Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City to head the Baptist Student Union and to teach Biblical studies courses at TSU. Late, in 1962, he and his wife Audrey established Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church in Third Ward. Lawson was initially reticent to become involved in civil disobedience in Houston or to approve of such action for his students. On that late night in 1960, he admonished students, “You know that you’re messing your future up? If you get booked and go to jail, you may never be able to get a civil service job... you can’t serve your country. There’s a number of things you can’t do. Why would you take a chance like this?” They responded by telling Lawson “in no uncertain

terms they didn't come asking my permission as to whether they could protest." When Lawson again tried to convince them to remain compliant with the city's status quo, the students walked out on him. In retrospect he recalled, "I still didn't understand that a page in history had turned." Their activism would eventually inspire his own later in the 1960s as he realized "the importance of community involvement" as well as what he would later understand as his Christian obligation to fight racism.²⁹

Though the Houston NAACP and the Harris County Council of Organizations had accomplished much in desegregating many of Houston's public spaces throughout the 1950s—libraries, parks, and the Municipal Airport—many of its private businesses remained staunchly Jim Crow. TSU's Progressive Youth Association swiftly changed that. They made their initial protest on March 4, 1960, at Weingarten's Grocery and Deli, just seven blocks west of campus at 4110 Almeda Road. Stearns maneuvered to have local news outlets there to document the encounter when one hundred students converged on the store, either standing outside of it or sitting at its lunch counters. The press chronicled the conflict—there was no violence, but store employees roped off the lunch counter and declared it closed. The next protest occurred at Mading's Drugs lunch counter, located at the corner of Oakdale and Almeda, also in Third Ward. This time, the threat of violence appeared when a carload of Galveston white supremacists walked in, but who were deterred from acting out when a Houston police officer entered. On March 7th, however, "Heavenly Houston" received a shock. Four white men abducted Felton Turner, a twenty-seven-year-old man as he walked near TSU's campus. In a nearby wooded area they tied his hands and knees, beat him, and carved two rows of the letters "KKK" in his torso before telling him to warn the NAACP to stop agitating in Houston. Though police officers quickly investigated the incident, they never found the perpetrators.³⁰



Image 8 "Flog and Carve KKK on Negro," *Jet*, March 24, 1960.

The attack on Turner, however, did garner the attention of Houston's business leaders and politicians, who were as embarrassed by this violent attack as earlier leaders had been by the bombing on the Caesar residence. City Council member Louie Welch suggested that local businesses simply remove their stools and tables and have people stand and eat at lunch counters to avoid any further issues about integrated dining. Meanwhile, Mayor Lewis Cutrer invited TSU students to his office, arguing that he "wasn't going to tolerate" any further protests. The students walked out on his meeting, and on March 25th, they marched from TSU to City Hall to embarrass the city further during a visit from an

Argentinian ambassador to the United States. Singing as they circled the building, the protest group sent a small delegation of students inside City Hall to order food and drinks in the cafeteria. To their surprise, they were served, though white diners got up from their tables, leaving their trays and food behind. Welch walked in, got a meal, and ate at a table next to the students.³¹

Mayor Cutrer later announced that he would have student protesters arrested if they continued their insubordination. Houston Police Department Chief Carl Shuptrine “went on the air and indicated that they had violated no law and that the mayor would have to lock them up [himself] because [HPD] wasn’t going to.” In response, on April 7th, Cutrer called a thirty-seven-member biracial Citizens Relations Committee to determine what to do about race relations in the city. When nineteen members of the Committee voted in May that businesses in the city should desegregate, it was disbanded.³²

The Committee’s failure came just in time for students to execute a Mother’s Day protest, which was “phenomenally effective.” Downtown businesses, still the heart of Houston’s commercial life, felt the financial sting as black Houstonians boycotted them ahead of the holiday. The vice president of Foley’s, the city’s largest department store and biggest advertiser, called on Houston’s business leaders and press to discuss how best to handle the protest movement. His co-conspirators included Mayor Cutrer, Bill Wallace, the head of the Retail Merchants’ Association, Oveta Culp Hobby, owner of the *Houston Post*, John T. Jones, publisher of the *Houston Chronicle* and chair of the Houston Endowment, and Hobart Taylor, insurance entrepreneur and millionaire son of formerly enslaved Jack Taylor. Using their collective influence, these business leaders quietly commanded the simultaneous desegregation of all downtown businesses while also manufacturing a media “blackout,” wherein none of the city’s newspapers—including the black-owned *Forward Times* and

Informer (which relied on Foley's advertising) reported on what was transpiring. Though their movement had been temporarily quieted by the news blackout, the students could see that less than six months after their first march, seventy businesses in downtown Houston had begun serving black patrons. White customers' resistance was short-lived and ineffectual.³³

Then, on December 5, 1960, the Supreme Court decided in *Boynton v. Virginia* that segregation in public transportation was unconstitutional. This decision held that the same was true for restaurants located at bus terminals and rail depots that serviced interstate passengers. Thurgood Marshall brought the news to Houston in February 1961. On the 25th of that month, student protesters arrived at Union Station (now Minute Maid Stadium) in downtown Houston, looking to be served at its coffee shop. The manager blocked their entry and refused to serve them. When they declined to leave he had them arrested—"the first mass arrests in the Houston protest movement." The students "laughed about the whole thing," even as they were fingerprinted and put into jail cells, believing that the arrests and press coverage would "revitalize the movement." Local attorney George Washington Jr. used their arrests to raise money and awareness. With the help of the Congress of Racial Equality's (CORE) Freedom Riders, the local protest movement successfully challenged Union Station's refusal to serve black interstate passengers, and a month later the Interstate Commerce Commission ordered desegregation across the country.³⁴

The revitalized movement carried its weight into 1962, as Houston made a bid to become the home of the first major baseball team in the South. Quentin Mease set his sights on the state-funded domed stadium, which the former mayor and the dome's loudest booster Roy Hofheinz referred to as the "Eighth Wonder of the World." Mease threatened

another student protest if Hofheinz would not promise that the stadium would be an integrated facility. The pending protest threatened to embarrass Houston on an international stage, as TSU students prepared to create a blockade on both sides of the downtown parade that was celebrating Astronaut Gordon Cooper's return from the last Mercury space mission. Hofheinz and his backers capitulated. Likewise, behind the scenes, Houston's hotels and movie theaters "quietly desegregated" during a media blackout.³⁵

This quiet did not last through the decade. Several developments in the late 1960s changed the ways the city responded to student activism. Under Nabrit's administrations, student activists could depend on the support of their University. Nabrit passed on vital information to student leaders. He also publicly promised the student body that he "didn't intend to take any steps to interfere with their activities" and guaranteed that student protesters would not have to fear for expulsion under his leadership. However, students did not enjoy the same unfettered approval when Nabrit resigned in 1966, replaced by acting president Dr. Joseph Pierce. Pierce's ascendancy to school leadership coincided with the arrival of SNCC to Houston, whose presence he did not welcome on campus. Moreover, by the late 1960s, the elite business class's influence on city politics was waning.³⁶ Mayor Louie Welch, though concerned with the city's image to the world, was emboldened by his characteristically racist Chief of Police Herman Short to suppress black people's unrest rather than quietly negotiate with them. Short, who was appointed in 1964 by Welch, was less likely to approach student activists with caution than Jack Heard. He viewed his Department as "standing between law-abiding society and some that were not quite so law-abiding," believing that black Houstonians who challenged the racial status quo were necessarily of a criminal element. Indeed, he maintained "surveillance files on prominent" black leaders, and when his officers were accused of being KKK members, he replied: "I am

not a Klansman, and I know of no police officer who is a Klansman. You can't fault a man, however, for praising God, country, and obedience to law and order. That's what we all stand for." With a blatant racist at the head of the police department, a neglectful mayor, fractured civil rights leadership, and an unfriendly TSU administration, the late 1960s certainly represented different terrain for any black Houstonians engaging in civil disobedience.³⁷

Civil rights leadership in the city was also changing. Black Houstonians' major civil rights victories in the 1940s and 1950s had come through court action under the leadership of middle class-dominated organizations—the NAACP and the Harris County Council of Organizations (HCCO). The media blackout had negatively affected the prominence of both organizations as younger activists looked toward direct action models as more legitimate forms of protest. Christia Adair was no longer running the affairs of the Houston NAACP, and the organization, which had been effective in fighting legal battles against desegregation, had not been able to adapt to black Houston's (post)-Jim Crow struggles given its censure by the Texas courts in 1957.³⁸

In the stead of these former organizational powerhouses, SNCC, the Deacons for Defense, and the Black Power Freedom Army attempted to convince Houstonians and black people across the nation that massive resistance served the best interests of all black Americans. TSU students seemed ripe for recruitment. Former students and current faculty members who had witnessed or been directly involved in the nonviolent civil disobedience protests in the city in the early 1960s were still engaged in campus life and anti-poverty work in the latter years of that decade. Earl Allen was now the director of the Houston-Harris County Economic Opportunity Organization (EOO), funded by President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty initiatives. On May 16, the EOO merged with Houston Action

for Youth, another War on Poverty program focused on providing social services to Houston's poor communities. The newfound Harris County Community Action Association (HCCAA) met at 2211 North Main Street, about five blocks east of the intersection of I-10 and I-45 in Fifth Ward. The Association employed many activist-minded TSU students and created networks between Harris County's far-flung impoverished black neighborhoods, which workers could reach by traveling across the highways that had devastated their residential predecessors in the inner core like Fifth Ward.³⁹

But the HCCAA was also populated by church leaders and community organizers from across the city who argued that "some of the people in other areas of town... don't think TSU represents all the wisdom in the Negro community." They opposed outsiders coming into their neighborhoods to impose social justice programs on their residents. They believed that TSU students did "represent the thrust of the young Negroes in the community, and we need to listen to them, but we are not ready to turn the direction of the [anti-poverty] program over to them." For example, while the desegregation of downtown lunch counters certainly proved a win against Jim Crow for TSU students, this had little consequence for those residents in Acres Homes whose social and commercial life resided squarely within their north-northeast enclave. Importantly, though, HCCAA members also believed they needed to "be careful that TSU didn't get left out as usual."⁴⁰

TSU, then, presented a problem and offered a promise to black Houston's new anti-poverty leadership. The campus, while a constitutive part of Third Ward—and indeed, a party too of the many neighborhoods in Houston from which its students came and in which many of them still lived—also existed apart from the rest of the city. The "academically oriented" politics and grievances of the students did not capture the larger problems of environmental racism, vigilante violence, and political suppression that

communities in Fifth Ward, Sunnyside, and Northwood faced. Kelton Sams, a leader in Galveston's 1961 sit-in movement and graduate of the University of Texas, impressed upon the Association that black Houston's woes were "not centered at TSU."⁴¹ But newcomers to campus, like Franklin Alexander, national director of the W. E. B. Du Bois Club, Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick of the Deacons of Defense, and Lee Otis Johnson, who helped found the Friends of SNCC in Houston, brought with them the youthful vigor and a willingness to meet violence with violent resistance. Inspired by the anti-Vietnam War protests on campuses likely Berkeley, the anti-capitalist rhetoric of an increasingly popular Kwame Ture (formerly Stokely Carmichael), and fiery urban rebellions, this class of campus leaders found common ground with the neighborhood-based protests happening on the north and south sides of the city in 1967, and linked those struggles with the grievances of students on the campus. At times they were successful in convincing students at TSU and at the University of Houston to engage in activism outside of their academic enclaves, but many students resisted. That is, not only did black Houstonians sometimes leave TSU out, but TSU students, many of whom were not native Houstonians and not invested in the broader politics of the city, remained uninterested in what they saw as the unrelated grievances of Houston's numerous black neighborhoods.⁴²

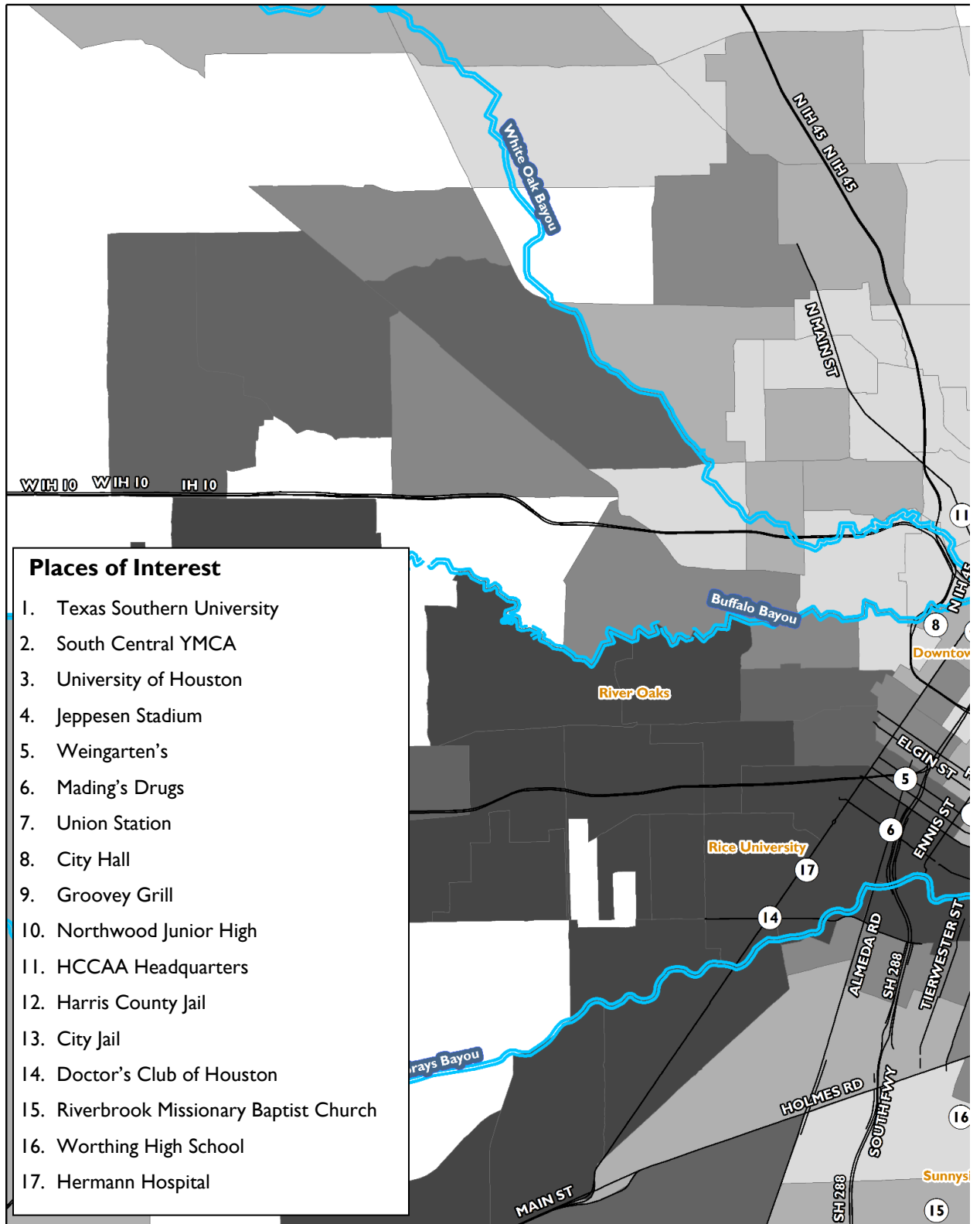
Thus, TSU was not unlike other black spaces in the city, where spatial isolation limited cross-community activism. So, although black Houstonians shared the grievances of communities in Oakland, Newark, Detroit, and Los Angeles, their geographic dispersal into neighborhoods that were only tenuously connected by expansive highways and common racial grievances appeared to reduce the likelihood of a large, collective uprising. In Houston there was "no large one concentrated ghetto" and neighborhoods were characterized by "all sorts of little provincialisms." One black activist noted, "[T]here are

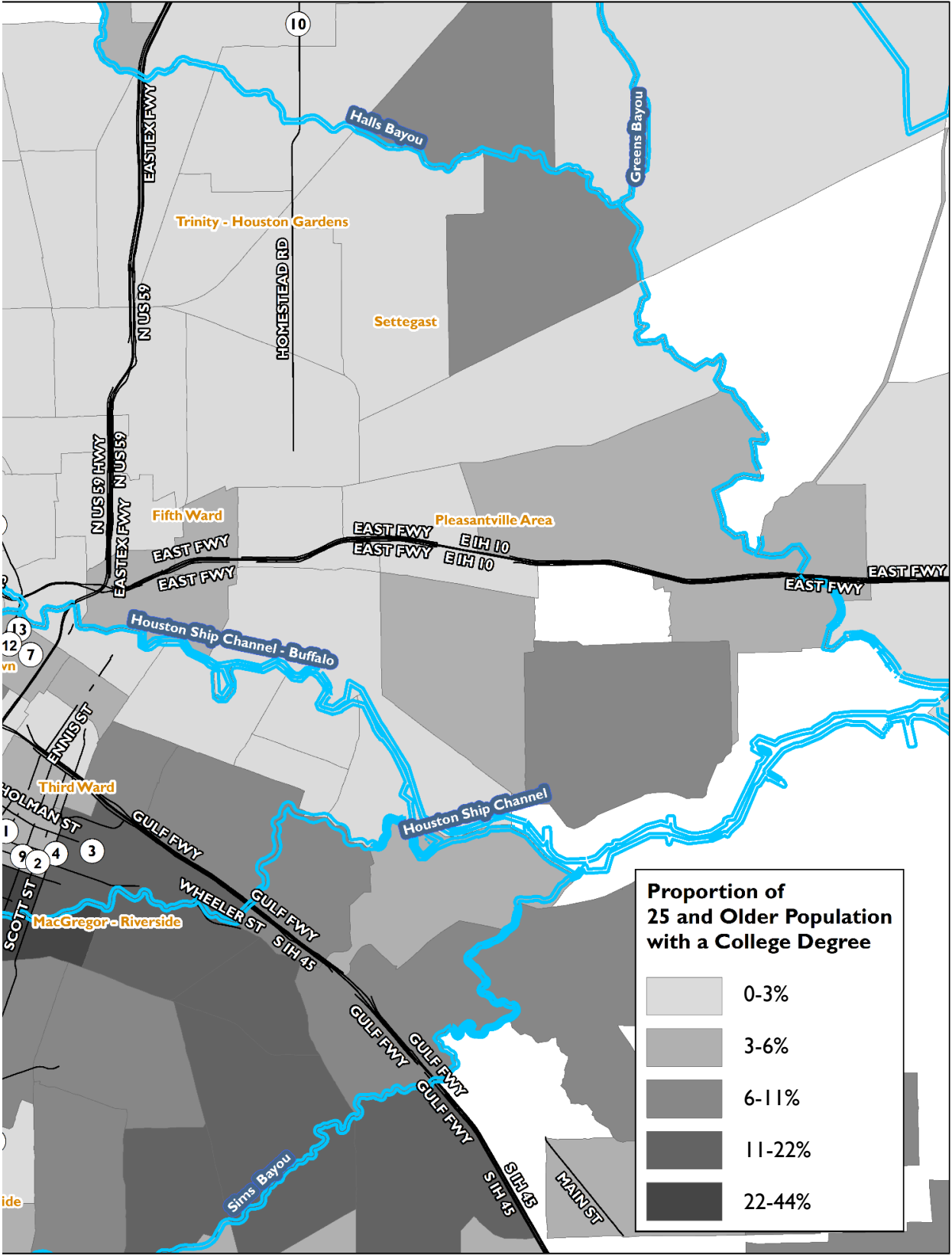
fifth warders who wouldn't come south of the bayou, there are third warders who wouldn't go north of it." TSU students, then, presented an opportunity to community leaders looking to bridge some of those geographic gaps. Students who lived outside Third Ward had connections with the neighborhoods they stayed in. Social justice-minded students on campus could be recruited to work in summer programs at the South Central YMCA and add numbers to smaller neighborhood-based protests. However, this movement of people was not reciprocated. Black Houstonians—even those Third Warders who lived next door to TSU—did not join the students in their on-campus protests, viewing those as issues to be governed within the institution rather than by the city or county.⁴³

Accordingly, a divide between the University and other black Houston communities placed the student resistance on campus more squarely within the context of campus rebellions rather than urban uprisings.⁴⁴ Campus rebellions, while often precipitated by police brutality like the rebellions in Harlem in 1935 and 1943, Mobile, Alabama, in 1943, and Watts in 1965, were not commodity riots where locals converged on white-owned businesses and looted goods. At TSU and other campuses, vandalism was directly related to immediate protest needs: tossing food on the cafeteria floor to protest unhealthy dining standards, destroying street lamps to avoid police surveillance, and pelting police vehicles with projectiles to reclaim autonomy of campus space were not akin to the kind of spontaneous economic reprisals that black urbanites engaged in elsewhere. While their activism was certainly informed by urban uprisings and anti-war protests that had spread across the country in the mid-to-late 1960s, students on black campuses were most concerned with problems at their particular institutions and their activities tended to conform to their academic calendars.⁴⁵

But while campus rebellions differed from urban uprisings, the law enforcement responses in cities across the country was quite similar. Following the Watts Rebellion, President Johnson's Office of Law Enforcement Assistance (OLEA), established in 1965, provided "urban police departments with federal funds to increase their manpower, professionalize their force, and arm their officers with military-grade weapons" that Johnson believed "would make an immediate impact on crime rates." In its first three years, the OLEA distributed the bulk of \$22 million to local law enforcement agencies and in 1966 granted \$500,000 to fund "a comprehensive study of the ways in which scientific advances in defense and military contexts could be utilized by the police 'soldiers' in the War on Crime." In Houston, law enforcement agencies had already begun a program of surveillance on "targeted low-income neighborhoods as a means to control unruly teens." Following the student sit-in movement and the appointment of Herman Short as police chief, TSU figured as one such place in need of police "control." Indeed, Lieutenant Mallie L. Singleton testified that he had placed two officers on surveillance duty at the campus in 1967 and the Criminal Intelligence Division watched Friends of SNCC members. One black man, a Vietnam veteran and enrolled student at TSU, worked as a spy for the police department "infiltrat[ing] Negro organizations." The man worked with the Department to silence "black power" because "Negro extremists are 'becoming increasingly active and a threat to tranquility.'" Though Houstonians could pride themselves on a relatively peaceful desegregation process in the early 1960s, as the decade wore on and the public bought into Patrick Moynihan's notion of black people's cultural "pathology," an increasingly militarized police force, with the approval of an unsympathetic public, responded violently to black student activism in the city. While there were no live cameras and sunlight on the night of the siege on TSU, the hundreds of bullet holes and blood-stained floors and concrete

pathways indicated a state-sanctioned terroristic response to black civil rights activism in Houston that was certainly parallel to and just as devastating as Bull Connor's firehoses and dogs in Birmingham just four years prior.⁴⁶





The Friends of SNCC faced an uphill battle in convincing Houstonians that they had something better to offer than the liberal individualism that been the ideology directing racial progress in the city. They argued against tokenism in employment and education, saying that it only obscured the “general picture of the political, economic, and social patterns” that perpetuated the “extant cornerstones of American society”—namely, “racism and exploitation of black people.” The individualism that undergirded the increasing appeal of tokenism in a post-Jim Crow Houston was quite plainly white people’s “tricknology.” In tokenism’s stead they offered “black power,” which would acknowledge the persistent significance of racism in American society and tackle it by re-educating black people to understand that their destinies and possibilities were linked to one another. A black power epistemology would compel black people to resist police brutality with collective self-defense, increase black people’s political involvement in the judicial system, remove exploitative white businesses from black communities, and protect black women from white men. Indeed, no longer willing to accept the norms of polite Houston racial politics, wherein white people could freely abuse deferential black folks and wherein black college graduates fared worse in earned wages than white high school graduates, the Black Power Freedom Army called for a meeting at its office at 2024 Eastex Freeway in Fifth Ward. They encouraged black people to begin fighting back “in the street”: “If a honkey put [sic] his racist hand on you, try and break his damn arm.—break his damn neck—put some bottles on his ass.”⁴⁷

These bold rebuttals of white supremacy certainly garnered the attention of the Houston Police Department and the new administration at TSU. Black activists in the city suffered constant surveillance by the Houston Police Department, and at least one unlawful search of their office. A member of the Friends of SNCC reported that one day, likely in

1966 or 1967, “two plain clothes white police caught me at the door and didn’t show me a search warrant or warrant for arrest.” Instead, one officer “show[ed] me his gun and told me to get out the kitchen.” For twenty minutes the officers proceeded to destroy property and assault those occupying the house where the SNCC office was located: kicking down a bedroom door, throwing “Lee,” possibly Lee Otis Johnson, against a wall, and pulling another man out of bed as they searched, apparently, for guns. Despite the harassment, SNCC members continued to make noise on campus and throughout the city.⁴⁸

The Friends of SNCC noted the ways white residents and black people wedded to institutions like TSU undermined them and their organizing by painting them as undisciplined militants. They also publicized their many grievances toward the City of Houston and the TSU administration. Leaders pointed out multiple incidences of harassment by police officers and their efforts to demand fair treatment by law enforcement officials over the year leading up to the conflict at TSU. They had protected a black woman who they found being “shoved around by two members of the Houston Police Department” near Houston Gardens. When the Texas State Highway Patrol in Livingston, about an hour’s drive north-northeast of Houston, “brutally beat” four gospel singers from Houston in 1966, SNCC organized a march against police brutality and ran a letter campaign to Homer Garrison, director of the Texas Department of Public Safety. Opponents tried to intimidate them into silence from the beginning and until the end of their protest. When the Friends of SNCC met at the South Central YMCA in Third Ward to organize, “a dozen Klansmen” arrived to attack the students. Police “managed to persuade the Klansmen to leave”—the very least HPD could do to protect black citizens from racial intimidation.⁴⁹

Although the organization worked hard to undercut its reputation as a group of violent rabble-rousers, the failure of local police officers to duly protect black Houstonians

from white terror compelled its members to note the synergistic relationship between nonviolent civil disobedience and armed self-defense. Indeed, as inheritors of a long “black tradition of arms,” they also saw no conflict in equally prioritizing the tenets of non-violence and self-defense. Floyd Nichols, a supporter of the Friends of SNCC and an undergraduate at TSU, explained his position: “I don’t advocate violence, but I’m not going to let violence advocate me,” by which he meant that SNCC members were willing to respond with force in order to protect themselves and their dignity, but that violence was not the organization’s mode of operation for securing civil rights. If the state would not protect them, they would make their own safe spaces.⁵⁰

Unfortunately for SNCC, the administration at TSU also failed to make the campus safe for student activists. Mack H. Jones, a political scientist, taught at the university and served as the faculty advisor for the Friends of SNCC. His wife, economics scholar Barbara Ann Posey Jones, was also a faculty member during the academic year of the highway assault. Friends of SNCC, she recalled, had arranged its protest of the Highway Patrol on the same day that President Pierce was set to address the Houston Endowment to solicit financial support for the school. She recounted, “The president canceled his visit and the administration fired Mack” in order to prove “they had taken action against the ‘inappropriate behavior of their students.’”⁵¹

Students responded to Jones’s dismissal with disbelief and swift protest. For them, the administration’s action illustrated a lack of regard for academic freedom as well as the claims to “basic human freedom” that SNCC remained committed to. They hinted that any administrative or faculty member who had been involved in Jones’s dismissal were “Uncle Toms.” On Monday, March 27, 1967 the Friends of SNCC protested at TSU, complaining that the University refused to recognize them as an official campus group. Dean of Students

James Jones noted that the University would not acknowledge any student group that did not present, to him, an exact proposal of the group's mission. Moreover, in the case of Friends of SNCC, they needed to prove "an established relationship with the chartered SNCC in Atlanta," although why this was necessary remained unclear.⁵²

In addition to opposing the University's refusal to recognize their group, Friends of SNCC also demanded the reinstatement of Mack H. Jones, the closing of Wheeler Avenue to public traffic, better cafeteria food, and an end to early curfews for female students who resided in campus housing.⁵³ TSU's proximity to UH made these demands all the more reasonable to SNCC members, who juxtaposed the two very different student life realities of each campus and made demands accordingly:

Texas Southern University is an all-black college controlled by whites. Six blocks up the street is the University of Houston. Cops at TSU carry guns, cops at the U. of H. do not. The curfew for girls at TSU is 9 p.m., at the U. of H. it is 11 p.m. The food is better at the U. of H. Texas Southern offers no courses in the modern branches of engineering and technology.... Change the curfew hours to the same as on the white campuses. All disciplinary action [must] go through a student court whose powers shall be at least equal to that of the Dean of Students. Replace the present slop served in the cafeteria with edible nutrition. Increase all salaries of TSU and maintenance personnel to the level of white campuses. Remove Dean James B. Jones from the Draft Board.... Disarm the campus police.⁵⁴

The size of the protest reportedly grew to about 400 students, who attempted to force an academic boycott by barricading doors to academic buildings with wooden beams from a construction site near the Student Union. Sociologist Henry Allen Bullock arrived to teach a class, and students refused him entry. He reportedly "broke into tears," saying, "If this is all my years of teaching has meant to you, it is the end." Bullock left TSU in 1969 to become the first black professor in the school of arts and sciences at the University of Texas at Austin, although whether the student protest compelled this remains unclear. When asked to remove the beams because they presented "a fire hazard," protesters complied, and, instead, students blocked entryways with their own bodies. When Dean Jones arrived and

requested that the students allow their fellow undergraduates to attend class, the protesters again complied, and by the afternoon classes resumed. Changing strategy, Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick led about 175 protesters from the academic buildings to Wheeler Avenue. The group “marched back and forth along the street protesting its use as a public thoroughfare,” effectively shutting down the flow of traffic through their campus.⁵⁵

As April turned to May, students’ frustrations with municipal and University negligence regarding their grievances met the usual excitement that fills college campuses near the academic year’s end. Students aimed to revel in each other’s company, but Wheeler Avenue often made their campus feel unsafe, especially because one of their most likely outdoor gathering spaces—a sunken patio pit in front of the Student Union—faced Wheeler. The street had already been a traffic nuisance, but increasingly it seemed, “some KKK” and other racist white people had made a habit of driving down the street, “throwing cocktails out of the windows and driving with a [Confederate] flag.” For the students, there was no other way to deal with the “individuals” who rode “up and down our campus yelling insulting remarks at us.” One student testified, “On several occasions we have had several white kids ride up and down the campus shooting guns in the air. This is why we want the street closed down.” Students responded by complaining to both SNCC leaders and University officials, but also by taking direct action.⁵⁶

Friends of SNCC’s initial boycott of classes and disruption of the traffic flow on Wheeler lasted until the 29th of March, when the group and the administration agreed to forestall any further protests until Friday afternoon, “by which time the administration was supposed to have reached a decision” regarding the students’ demands. On Monday, April 3, after the University denied each of their requests, Friends of SNCC resumed their boycott of classes, again barring entry into the academic buildings. Lee Otis Johnson, at the time

suspended from TSU but still active in Friends of SNCC, and Franklin Alexander, president of the W. E. B. Du Bois Club and currently visiting Texas, assisted Kirkpatrick in leading the protest. Kirkpatrick estimated that “as many as 1,500” students joined the protest, which included again blocking vehicle traffic on Wheeler Avenue. “At nightfall,” he recalled, “we held a street dance which attracted a huge crowd.”⁵⁷

Then, according to Kirkpatrick, on Tuesday, April 4th at about 1:00 in the morning, “police officers accompanied by FBI agents woke me up in the South Central YMCA where I was sleeping and took me to the Harris County jail.” They also arrested Alexander at the YMCA and were searching for Johnson. President Pierce had apparently signed a request for the arrest of the young men. The charges claimed that “the defendants met unlawfully and did thereafter seriously and publicly threaten to kill any police officer who might undertake to arrest any demonstrators.” After hearing of the arrests, several female students, locked in the dorms, “broke down the doors and left to join” an impromptu midnight meeting, where Trazawell Franklin, a TSU undergraduate and member of the Friends of SNCC, told the crowd the details of the arrest, but informed them that nothing could be done that night. Organization and protest, he assured them, would follow after a night of planning and rest.⁵⁸

Later that morning, President Pierce addressed students in a campus auditorium, inviting student organization representatives, “including Friends of SNCC, to discuss with me any grievances that may have.” He assured his audience that he and his administrative staff desired “to carry on a dialogue with students.” On April 10th, in a memo to the whole student body, he reiterated his call, noting that had had received “no response” to his open invitation. He therefore suggested creating a “Student Advisory Committee to the President,” comprised of nine democratically elected students. Students in the Colleges of

Arts and Sciences, as well as the Graduate School, and the schools of Industries, Pharmacy, Law, and Business would all select additional representatives. Each of the six dormitories on campus would also be able to select one representative each. The president's committee would build close ties with the Student Council. Together, these representatives and organizations would help establish and sustain "dialogue" between the "very top echelon" of TSU's administrative staff and students in an effort to "solve whatever problems that exist."⁵⁹

Pierce may have predicted that students would have been uninterested in his request for "dialog," since on the day of his meeting with the student body in the auditorium, Johnson "walked out of the assembly, announcing an immediate march to the county jail to demand" the release of Kirkpatrick and Alexander. The marching students made a pit-stop at the University of Houston, where they gathered about 200 sympathizers to join them on their push toward downtown. Before they made it to the jail, however, while walking down Holman Street, "about 20 helmeted officers armed with sub-machine guns and riot guns" arrested Johnson. The students, about 500 strong, continued their march without him. The vacuum left by the arrests of Kirkpatrick, Alexander, and Johnson inspired other leaders to take on the role of inspiring the students to stay. SNCC members Carl Moore, Douglass Wayne Waller, and Charles Freeman delivered speeches to their audience, while Trazawell Franklin kept the crowd alive by leading songs.⁶⁰

Charles Freeman had come to Houston from Port Arthur, Texas, in 1965 when he became "the first and only black undergraduate male" at Rice University. Freeman recalled feeling "isolated" on the campus and his academic performance suffered for it, resulting in his academic suspension from the University in January 1967. Freeman then matriculated at TSU where he quickly became a vocal presence, speaking at student protests and rising to

prominence in the Friends of SNCC organization. Floyd Nichols also spoke, assuring the crowd that their peaceful protest would secure the leaders' releases, and that they need not do anything to provoke the three hundred watching police officers to violence. The students remained at the courthouse steps until "late into the following day" after an embarrassed President Pierce dropped his charges against the leaders. Assured of victory, the students finally returned to their campuses, although they later learned that the district attorney had filed additional charges against the men, which kept them imprisoned. On Friday, the court reduced the initial bonds of \$25,000 to \$1,000, which each of the men posted.⁶¹

Throughout April and the first weeks of May, students continued a now regular ritual of throwing bottles and bricks at passing cars after being provoked by white drivers. HPD officers often resorted to temporarily redirecting traffic around Wheeler Avenue as a result of these protests. Trazawell Franklin and Charles Freeman joined in the revelry, providing the students with more ammunition from the trash cans behind the nearby Groovey Grill, at the corner of Wheeler and Tierwester. In recent weeks Franklin had often been reprimanded by Dean Jones, so before he could participate in the bottle-throwing Franklin recalled that several "SNCC brothers came and got me off the campus" in order to prevent the administration from blaming them for the disturbance. Nevertheless, the next day, Jones chastised Franklin, saying that he had proof the young man had been involved. The conversation ended bitterly, with Jones telling Franklin he should move off campus if the student was "tired of coming in his office," and Franklin demanding a housing refund in order to finance that move. Jones agreed, though it would take about a week to process the money.⁶²

On May 15, Charles Freeman arrived in the student coffee shop on TSU's campus to alert students about problems black families were having at the newly integrated Northwood Junior High School, located on Homestead Road about 10.5 miles north and west of downtown. Rumors included claims "that a white teacher had jumped on a negro boy," which riled up the crowd at TSU. However, the parents of black students at Northwood were distressed that their children had been suspended from school for the remainder of the semester for fighting with white students, while the white students had only been suspended for three days. One high school student testified that a teacher, Mr. Bill, "likes to put his hands on the girls' chest[s]." When investigators asked, "Black or white girls?" she responded, "Colored!" Black students and parents had been enduring such unfair treatment by the administration at the school since the beginning of the school year. The families there led a protest, and when police officers arrived, Kirkpatrick and others warned "the police to not move against the picket line." At the campus coffee shop, Freeman, Carl Moore, Trazawell Franklin, Bill Richards, Carla Collins, and five other students decided to get involved and rode to the north side neighborhood. However, when they arrived around 2:00 in the afternoon they found that administrators had dismissed students from the school early and the protest had ended. Mrs. Wendell Thompson, a parent of one of the suspended students, invited the TSU students to her house, where they talked to her and some of the Northwood students to learn about the problems they faced and the plan for further protest.⁶³

After staying with the Thompsons for about three hours, Franklin and a few other students went back to campus and gathered in the coffee shop, where they snacked and played cards until 7:30 in the evening. Rumors started spreading that Johnson and Kirkpatrick had been arrested again, so Franklin, Collins, and Floyd Nichols went back to

the Thompson residence, where they learned the rumor was false. Several leaders, including Kirkpatrick, Johnson, Carolyn Banks, and John Morris were at the Thompsons' house, strategizing about how to protect the black residents in her neighborhood. "They told us that K.K.K. had been shooting out there," Franklin remembered, "and burned a cross in [front of] Mr. Bate's house and he was frightened because he didn't have no kind of protection." That night, Nichols, Franklin, and two other young men stayed at the Bate's residence as guards.⁶⁴

After an uneventful night, Franklin and the other TSU students took the Bate's family's elementary school-aged children to school and their daughter to Northwood. Unfortunately, their middle school-aged son had been one of the students suspended for fighting. He and other suspended boys stood by listlessly. The TSU students reconvened at the Thompson residence, learning that organizers had arranged for more TSU students to arrive for a protest at the junior high school. The plan was that Northwood students would lead the protest, and TSU students would "stand on the sideline and watch." Expecting trouble given the terrorism they had been experiencing on campus and on the north side, several of the students at TSU planned to take guns with them to the protest, but eventually the female students convinced their male counterparts that they should leave their weapons at the Thompson house. When Franklin and the others arrived at the scene around 11:00 in the morning, police had already begun charging across Homestead Road toward the protesting youngsters. This time, the reinvigorated police force arrived with "riot guns and dogs." Kirkpatrick remembered, "In infantry style, the riot squad and sheriff's deputies advanced on the peaceful picket line, billy clubs and rifle butts swinging." Officers arrested the entire crowd, including Kirkpatrick and Lee Otis Johnson. "Many were beaten up. All were roughed up," Kirkpatrick reported. SNCC confirmed, "Many children and their

parents were thrown in jail because of their lawful concern for a better education for children and a safe space in which to live.” One man riding with Franklin in the car pointed out that “the police was hitting the Junior High School students all in the head.” Attempting to avoid the confrontation, the TSU students with Franklin began driving away from the scene, but before they could get far city police stopped and detained them until the county sheriff’s department arrived to cart them off to the county jail.⁶⁵

O. C. Brown, a student at TSU and a resident of Sunnyside, had also joined about twenty classmates and thirty junior high school students at Northwood. He estimated that about two hundred cops had arrived on the scene to quell the protest, and when he and his friends saw the police charge across Homestead Road to attack the protesters, they got in their car to leave. An officer stopped them at a traffic light, told them to get out of the car, and searched them. When Brown asked him why they were being detained, the officer said for “inciting a riot.” Brown denied that they had been involved in any riot, but another officer assured them that he had photographic evidence that they had been at Northwood. The police arrested the young men, but allowed the young women present to go. From the back of the police wagon Brown could see cops nearby “beating some of the juveniles”—students from Northwood. One suffered a blow to his genitals from a police officer’s blackjack. He could also hear the repeated, though rather uncreative insults the officers hurled at the kids: “You damn niggers.” The wagon carrying Brown arrived at the Harris County Jail around 11:30. Altogether, officers had arrested about forty people at Northwood. Later that day, they each stood before a judge, pleaded “no contest,” and were eventually released at about 6:00 in the evening when civil rights leader Booker T. Bonner posted \$1 bail for each of them.⁶⁶

Douglas Wayne Waller, Lee Otis Johnson, and two other activist students had not been present at the Northwood protest. Waller was a twenty-one-year-old Vietnam War veteran who had enrolled at TSU and became active with the Friends of SNCC. When Waller arrived on campus from his sister and brother-in-law's home, it was already 1:00 in the afternoon. He found Johnson and other students in the coffee shop discussing the arrests at Northwood and learned that his roommate Bobby had been among the arrestees. Waller agreed to travel north to see if he could help bail Bobby out. They found the Thompson residence packed with parents of arrested youth, leaders such as Kirkpatrick, as well as "a few of the girls from the campus"—probably those who had traveled to the protest with O. C. Brown. Many of the guests stayed at the Thompson residence until they learned of the protesters' releases. Waller, Freeman, and Nichols—who arrived at the Thompson residence after visiting the county jail to see if he could get SNCC members released—among others, left the Thompson residence around 6:00 that evening when they heard rumors that a young child had been shot nearby.⁶⁷

They drove around for a bit, guns in hand, trying to find where the boy had been shot and by whom. Waller and Nichols had gotten into the habit of carrying guns with them.⁶⁸ Nichols explained:

On the north side there was a brick-throwing incident wherein a white man pulled a gun on me and this started me to getting ready to carry mine, but I didn't report it to the police. Another one of my friends had a gun pulled on him on Wheeler where I witnessed it. Also on the north side, another man poked his gun [out of his truck] window. I later sawed off my shotgun and started carrying it. All this was after these guns were pulled on us.⁶⁹

Nichols had kept this gun with him on the night he and Franklin stayed at the Batese residence to protect the family there. It provided some sense of security, given the uptick in Klan attacks on black Houstonians and the inability or unwillingness of the Houston Police Department and Harris County Sheriff's Office to provide adequate protection to black

people. It may have been his best option to carry his own firearm, but it also increased the risk of his arrest on firearm charges if he were stopped by police. Perhaps thirty minutes later, the group decided to return to campus, with Nichols and Waller taking a pit stop to purchase a gallon of wine. While they sat in a car in the TSU parking lot drinking, a female UH student, probably named Paula, came by and talked to them about another set of arrests that had happened in Sunnyside and plans for a meeting at Riverbrook Missionary Baptist Church in that neighborhood. The intoxicated group got back into their vehicle to travel southward, stopping at Worthing High School to speak to a crowd there before heading to the church.⁷⁰

Earlier that day on the south side of town, residents of urban Sunnyside had been protesting the Holmes Road Dump, accompanied by student members of the University of Houston's Committee on Better Race Relations (COBRR), Friends of SNCC members from TSU, and junior and senior high school students. It had already proven an environmental hazard, bludgeoning the community with persistent problems of "foul odors, smoke, rats, roaches and filth." UH's *Daily Cougar* noted that the dump was "located near schools, homes and a park in a predominately Negro area." Earlier in the morning, a young black child, Victor George, drowned at the Dump, the last straw for residents who felt that their requests to shutter the Dump had gone neglected for too long.⁷¹

Prior to the protest, Bill Lawson, now an emboldened activist, informed students joining in the protest that Sunnyside residents needed their support, because "what is happening to Negroes in Sunnyside can happen to Negroes anywhere." Gene Locke, chairman of COBRR, joined Lawson at the protest, despite being warned that police would likely arrest everyone present. This turned out to be a fair warning. Locke reported that officers "snatched" him up and "forcefully manhandled" him "into a police car." Officers

moved him and others to jail without telling them what crime they had been charged with. Only later did each arrestee learn that officers decided to charge them with “loitering” and that they each had to pay a twenty-five dollar bond for release. Participants told Kirkpatrick that “belligerent” white onlookers antagonized them as police gathered them for arrest, but none of them had been charged with loitering.⁷²

Around 6:30, after he arrived back on campus from jail, Franklin learned about the arrests at the Holmes Road Dump. He and Paula, from UH, figured that the arrestees were still in the city jail. The two ventured back downtown only to find that the protesters had been released. Back at TSU, they learned that organizers and protesters had reconvened for a meeting at a church in Sunnyside. He and Paula split ways. Back at the campus coffee house, Franklin attempted to find someone to chauffeur him to the church, but failed. He walked to the Dairy Cup nearby and noticed a “SNCC sister... named Thelda” in her car. She agreed to drive him to Sunnyside, where they found Waller, Nichols, Paula from UH, and Charles Freeman among others at the church. Lawson, however, was missing—among the arrestees who had not yet been released from jail. The meeting at the church had already ended and Waller and Nichols were still tipsy from their wine. Nichols had made an impassioned speech to the church crowd, admonishing them “to protect themselves with arms because they don’t know who might be shooting at them next.” After their speeches, the group had planned to go back to campus, so Franklin joined them on their ride back north. Nichols remained agitated through the trip. He kept his sawed-off shotgun nearby and “he was saying that he was going to kill a honkey tonight.” Franklin asked him to put the gun away, warning him that the police already had a target trained on his back.⁷³

Meanwhile, on campus, O. C. Brown, a student nicknamed Swahili, and another named Stanley Wright, among other activists, including Booker T. Bonner, managed to get a

ride back to the north side of town and stopped, probably around 7:30 in the evening, for food and planning at Mrs. Thompson's. F. D. Kirkpatrick, Floyd Nichols, Lee Otis Johnson, and several other TSU students were there as well. While eating, the students heard gunshots. They went outside and Brown saw "these little kids, they were running, and some Klans were shooting on the other side of this park and so myself and a few more of the guys, I forget their names, I know them when I see them, we went out there so they fired a shot at us at the same time." One man with Brown's group pulled his own firearm and shot back at the Klansmen, who ducked between bushes until the police arrived. Mrs. Thompson had called the police to the scene, but they only took unsigned statements from Thompson and her guests. At Mrs. Thompson's request, several of the TSU students agreed to stay with her through the night in order to protect her home against any "night riders" who might come by to terrorize her family. Other families of suspended students, including a Mrs. Virgie Eaton, also had TSU students stay with them for overnight protection. Eaton, unmarried and caring for three children—the oldest a nine-year-old boy by the name of Garlin who had been suspended from Northwood—noted that she had "high regard for the 'guys'" of SNCC as they "lifted" her during a difficult time.⁷⁴

Back at TSU, around 9:00 that night, Waller and Nichols had since split up—Nichols heading to the coffeehouse and Waller joining the growing crowd of students outside of the Student Union. Two campus officers joined the students there, discussing the rumors and reports coming from the north side and Sunnyside. Two HPD vehicles were parked across the street near the Science Building. Trazawell Franklin was among the crowd, discussing with campus police about his "experience in jail" and the treatment of black families by Northwood's school administration. Unsure why a crowd was building, Nichols spoke with Sergeant William D. Butler, head of campus police, telling him that the students wanted

HPD “to move out of the way and go on because we were tired of people treating us wrong.” Rather than seeing police officers as protectors—even the black security forces hired by the University—Nichols saw them as a threat. Nearby in the coffee house, around 9:30, an intoxicated Waller forced an altercation with an athlete named Maurice Hopson. Hopson and several other students were playing cards, and Waller expressed his disgust, demanding that they join him and other activists to plan another demonstration at Northwood. Like most students, Hopson did not see his interests as tied to those of black Houstonians’ struggles elsewhere in the city. Hopson told Waller “he did not have to fool with him and went on playing cards,” and that “the north side had nothing to do with him” at which point Waller “slapped him.” Hopson represented that contingency of black folks who did not agree with SNCC’s black nationalist vision, wherein the destinies of all black people were tied together. However, the full extent of his racial identity politics remain unknown. Hopson stood to retaliate, but Waller may have brandished one of three guns he had taken from the Thompson residence—guns others had left behind prior to the protest at Northwood—prompting Hopson’s friends to take him away from the coffee house and back to Jones Hall, the athletic dormitory. Waller left the building and joined the growing crowds of student outside of the Student Union.⁷⁵

The white press’s accounts of what happened next—the infamous “TSU riot”—were chronologically confounded and initially relied wholly on police statements and accounts of news personnel who arrived on the scene later. According to these stories, at 7:00 that evening, four officers of HPD’s Criminal Intelligence Division (CID), including white officers Robert G. Blaylock, James O. Norris, and black officers Albert L. Blair and Charles F. Howard, made their way to campus to keep track of any developments there. They observed about fifty students “milling around” in front of the Student Union at 8:15.

Two hours later, the crowd had tripled in size. A group of five students—John Parker, Trazawell Franklin, Douglas Wayne Waller, Floyd Nichols, and Charles Freeman—“approached the crowd stating: ‘They killed a six-year-old child out near the Scenic Wood school [Northwood Junior High]. What do you intend to do about it?’” At 10:15, Waller threw a watermelon at Blaylock and Norris’s police vehicle. Newspapers eventually reprinted the rumor that it was a watermelon rind, though Norris’s initial description stated that an entire watermelon had “burst on the hood” of his car. Blaylock and Norris then arrested Waller, found three guns on him, and had a unit pick him up from Jeppesen Stadium at Wheeler Avenue and Scott Street. Around 10:40, when the arresting officers returned to campus and parked their car across from the Student Union, students began throwing projectiles—rocks, bricks, and bottles—at the officer’s cars. At 10:50, the four officers turned their two vehicles southward, so that their headlights would “illuminate” the front of the Student Center. Around 11:00, student “snipers” began firing from the Junior-Senior Men’s dormitory and thirty minutes later a bullet from the second floor of the building injured Blaylock in the leg. At 11:35, “reinforcements” arrived, and officers continued to exchange intermittent gunshots with the snipers, judiciously firing only when they saw muzzles light up from the dormitory. Two hours later, at the request of Kirkpatrick and Lawson, the officers withdrew their vehicles from Wheeler Avenue and parked on Tierwester, to allow the two ministers to try to negotiate with students. The student snipers shot at Lawson as other students threw construction material into the street and set “asphalt barrels” filled with tar from a nearby construction site on fire. In response, Police Chief Herman Short ordered his officers to evacuate the men’s dorms on campus. As officers approached the dorms, they heard students destroying their own property inside. At 2:20 in the morning, student snipers wounded Officer Allen Dale

Dugger's jaw and shot Officer Louis Kuba in the head. By 3:05, the officers restored law and order to the campus, and five hours later a doctor pronounced Kuba dead.⁷⁶ This was the official story.⁷⁷

Student accounts, not widely publicized, painted a wholly different picture. Chester Logan, an undergraduate who did not live on campus but was present that evening, remembered the incident involving Douglass Waller and did not recall a watermelon—indeed, none of the firsthand student accounts testified even the presence of a watermelon. The watermelon rumor seemed to be Blaylock's idea of a racist joke that became canonized as fact in media reports. Instead, Logan recalled, as did other students, the altercation between Waller and Hopson in the coffee shop around 9:30. After Waller left the coffee house, Logan followed outside. Trazawell Franklin was talking to campus police officers and other students were becoming agitated at the presence of the two Houston Police Department vehicles. Finals season was upon the campus, and as at many schools, students at TSU had been gathering, leading up to the end of the semester to enjoy themselves and each other's company, in what they called "The Pit" in front of the Student Union. This typical undergraduate activity, then, padded the number of students who were at the Student Union to discuss activism or express their disdain for the police. Professor Leon Hardy, who witnessed the events of the night from the beginning, testified, indeed, "that many, in fact most were there just for the excitement," and continued, "Crowds like that are usual in front of the Union Building." Charles Freeman estimated that nearly two hundred students were "in the area at the time." Nearby, an intoxicated Nichols was passing a gun to another student when he released a shot into the ground. A student named Larry Johnson yelled, "Preacher, you almost shot my foot off." Around 10:30 and interrupting his drunk friend, a student named David Minor grabbed Nichols and told him

that Kirkpatrick was waiting for him at the Thompson residence, at which point Minor drove Nichols off campus.⁷⁸

Sergeant Butler had started his night shift at 10:00 that evening. He noticed a crowd in front of the Student Union upon his arrival, and joined their numbers. He remembered that students had been discussing the arrests and unfair treatment of students at Northwood Junior High. While students became irate listening to these stories, he recalled that Waller came out of this coffee house and began spreading the rumor that a black child had been shot at on the north side of town, saying “someone would have to pay [for] it.” Hopson and several other athletes arrived—perhaps thirty of them, Logan estimated—from the athletic dormitory to the front of the Student Union where Waller was, ready to retaliate for Waller’s earlier attack. Waller “fired one shot and... dispersed the crowd,” though most students did not go very far and many quickly came back to the scene. Campus security guards and officers Blair and Howard speedily intervened and took Waller’s gun. Blaylock and Norris remained in their car for ten minutes while campus security argued with Waller. Some students in the crowd became frustrated with the rising tension, and Butler reported that some in the crowd “started throwing bottles and bricks into the street at cars.” Blair and Howard attempted to quell the students but failed. Waller, annoyed by the police’s presence, demanded that the cops tell him why they had parked on Wheeler, and Officers Blair and Howard “immediately ordered him to move on.” Waller refused, and Trazawell Franklin caught sight of Officer Blaylock “jump out” of his police vehicle and “cock his... gun.” The show of aggression angered observing students. The black officers stopped arguing with Waller, arrested him, and placed him in the back of their car. While detained, Waller asked to speak to the campus police, but Blair and Howard refused the request and assured him they could be trusted. At some point during the detainment, the

officers either found Waller's two other guns or he turned them over. He later told officers that he had intended to distribute the guns to other students for self-protection, given the recent spate of violence against black people around Houston. At least one of the guns had recently been used in a robbery, which officers later charged Waller with. Shortly thereafter, Blaylock and Norris left campus with the prisoner and drove about three blocks east, where a police wagon picked up Waller and drove him downtown. Around 10:30, the white officers returned to their parking spot in front of the Science Building, across from the Student Union. Students responded by tossing rocks and bottles at the police vehicles. About this same time, Chester Logan said he began hearing gunshots. These, he guessed, had come from police officers, since some bullets were hitting the men's dormitories. Undergraduate Willie Robinson witnessed the shootings first hand, saying that at this time only the police had been shooting, targeting the bottles that students had thrown on the ground and apparently also targeting those that were still flying in the air. The officers ducked behind their cars and called in reinforcements.⁷⁹

At least one student threw a firecracker onto Wheeler Avenue, according to Officer Williams, who, along with Sergeant Butler, had begun turning traffic around from traveling down the street, enduring student taunts that they were "nigger honkies" doing the bidding of their oppressors. Throughout the early part of the night, in fact, many students assumed that intermittent gunshots they had heard were firecrackers, "because there are a lot of pranks going around—always shooting fireworks." For this reason, sophomore V. J. Hollins said he did not pay the noisy events of the night "too much attention."⁸⁰

Thomas Turner, a third-floor occupant of the Junior-Senior dorm, noticed the crowd outside at 9:30 on his return from the library. "I could sense that something was

wrong,” he said, so my roommate and I stayed in our room, [but] went out on the veranda to see what was going on at different intervals.” About that time, Hollins remembered that “the street was just filled with... people just throwing bottles and bricks at passing cars,” and after another firecracker landed in the street, “one of the officers... started shooting.” At least one student in the Junior-Senior dorm responded by “shooting back,” the first volley of gunshots between officers and students that Hollins recalled. Between 10:30 and 11:30, a bullet struck Blaylock, which one student retrospectively found ironic: “Oddly enough, the first police officer wounded in the melee was the same officer who was instrumental in provoking the entire incident” by aggressively brandishing his gun at Waller.⁸¹

Down on the ground below, Trazawell Franklin joined other students who threw projectiles at street lights in order to reduce the police officers’ visibility. Other students threw a few poorly manufactured Molotov cocktails—small canisters of flaming gasoline—on the street, while officers and students on the Junior-Senior dorm balcony exchanged intermittent gunfire. Richard Hurndon’s testimony mirrored those of other students, though with a few additional details. After Waller’s arrest, he noted that the two cops who had taken him returned, wielding their guns. Shortly after 10:30, four other officers arrived on the scene in unmarked cars. These cops parked their vehicles in the construction lot near the Student Union. Students continued to rock the officers’ cars with bottles and bricks and these four new arrivals responded by firing their guns.⁸²

Despite these confrontations, however, the campus was not in turmoil and the police were not confronting a riot. Throughout the early night, students uninvolved in the protests had been able to make their way through and across the campus. William Glaze returned to campus, probably just before 10:30 from an errand. He and his roommate

noticed “a group of students assembled in front of the Student Union Building.” He noted that “there seemed to be confusion,” so the two young men joined the crowd, seeking to learn what was happening. He too remembered that campus police were also standing around with the students. Then, at some point, probably close to 11:00, Glaze reported that he started hearing intermittent gunshots. Disturbed, he and his roommate vacated the Union and turned in at Lanier Hall for Men. They found their dorm matron, Mrs. Mattie Harbert, who told them “the best thing to do would be to go to our room and stay inside.” They followed her advice, and attempted to go to sleep, but “heard gunshots all through the night.” Finally, around 12:30 in the morning, or perhaps closer to 1:00, “we finally went to sleep.”⁸³

Many students had gone back into their dorm rooms around 10:00 when police officers first started shooting. Turner and his roommate were among this crowd and had turned in for the night. James Young, an undergraduate resident in the Junior-Senior dorm, left the campus library around 11:00 that night. As he crossed Wheeler Avenue, he noticed some youths gathered in front of the Student Union. An officer was standing in front of the students. Young thought nothing of it, “because 60 kids on the front is a usual occurrence these days.” He went to his second-floor dorm room, occasionally hearing a few rocks crash or bottles burst as he prepared for bed. However, “as the night grew longer” Turner and the residents of the Junior-Senior dorm continued hearing gunshots, and by 11:30, the gunfire was coming so rapidly and so often that the two young men moved to the bathroom. They stayed there until about 11:40, but had to vacate their beds again around midnight when the gunshots intensified again.⁸⁴

Likewise, Robert Allison Leroy Lewis Jr., an undergraduate and suitemate of Clarence Harper, remembered seeing police officers on Wheeler Street observing “some

fellows” who had gathered in front of and around the Student Union. “I don’t know what happened,” he testified, “but what I saw [sic] some fellows were shooting at the car parked in the street, shooting out the lights of the police car, and then, well, this continued for quite a while.” The first shot in this round was fired around 11:30, Young recalled. Initially, he said, these unidentified fellows were “throwing bottles and bricks at the policemen” and at some unspecified point in the interaction “the police shot a series of shots.” He claimed that as he peeked out of his dormitory door a bullet crashed through his window and flew “a couple of feet” near his head. Harper remembered the sequence of events about the same, adding that “the fellows started running” as police fired onto the campus. He and Lewis fled into their room, deciding that the bullet through their window was too close for comfort.⁸⁵

Carlyn Robbin, a resident in Lanier Hall for Men, had been studying for about two hours until he went to a friend’s room on the second floor to watch the television series “Have Gun—Will Travel” at 10:00. When the show went off, he and his friends watched an episode of “The Untouchables.” Hearing intermittent gunshots throughout, though, he said, “It had not bothered me,” suggesting that campus was not consumed by a riot but perhaps also indicating something about the frequency of gunfire or things that sounded like gunfire in the area in recent weeks. Afterwards, he visited another friend’s room where he played cards for about thirty minutes. At midnight, he and his friend went to shower, likely in the shared second-floor restroom. After about twenty minutes of bathing, Robbin returned to his room and went to bed, joining two of his three roommates. As the hour got closer to 2:00 in the morning, “the shooting seemed to increase.” One roommate, on a top bunk, said he was “getting scared,” so he left the room and went to the dormitory basement.

Robbin and his other roommate stayed, although he admitted they too had “started to get scared.”⁸⁶

These students in the dorms did not know that the increasing calm they testified about after midnight and before the final barrage of bullets began had resulted from the efforts of F. D. Kirkpatrick, Earl Allen, Bill Lawson, and Robert J. Moody, all ministers whom student activists knew well. Lawson had only been released from jail at about 1:00 that morning. Chief Short had been keeping Mayor Welch abreast of the situation, and when the student resistance failed to quiet down, Blair Justice, a criminologist from Rice University and one of Welch’s advisers, convinced the mayor that it would be prudent to have adult leaders that the students would respect on the scene. The four ministers came to mind, but Lawson was still in jail and Kirkpatrick’s whereabouts were unknown. Justice called Samuel L. Price, the head of Houston Action for Youth and deputy director of personnel for the HCCAA.⁸⁷

Price got in touch with Kirkpatrick who was with Allen at the Thompson residence. Kirkpatrick had already received two frantic calls from campus reporting that there was trouble afoot at TSU. The second call was more anxious than the first, with a young woman on the other end of the phone saying “that the cops was over there shooting at the students in the dormitory.” Believing the woman was pranking them, the folks at Mrs. Thompson’s turned on the radio, “and we heard they was really shooting over there.” Kirkpatrick left, making his way back to campus, as Mrs. Thompson and her guests listened to radio announcers attempt to relate the details from the scene correctly, though they frequently failed to do that. Meanwhile, on Eastex Freeway, officers had stopped and arrested Lee Otis Johnson, who had left Mrs. Thompson’s house earlier in the evening to take a lady friend home, and arrested him for “inciting a riot” at TSU. Floyd Nichols stayed

at Mrs. Thompson's house that night, while O. C. Brown, a student named Larry from Northwood Junior High, and a TSU student named Carol spent the night at a Miss Spivey's residence. They stayed up through most of the night, keeping abreast of the situation on campus by listening to the radio.⁸⁸

Meanwhile, Justice went to the city jail to procure Lawson, and rushed the minister "to campus in a squad car." Allen and Kirkpatrick arrived on the eastern edge of the campus, at Ennis Street and Wheeler Avenue, but "could not get on the campus proper because the street was barricaded by police officers." The ministers tried to convince police officers to let them through the barricades so they could try to speak with the students, but the officers refused the request unless they could "get word from a higher official." The ministers made their way around to the western side of campus, where Justice and Lawson had abandoned the squad car because it could not get through the "scores of squad cars and hundreds of riot-helmeted policemen."⁸⁹

There, at Justice's request, the ministers convinced the chief to de-escalate the situation by removing his officers from Wheeler Avenue. Short responded indignantly, saying, "You don't tell me what to do. I know what to do." Kirkpatrick replied, "Man, you don't know what to do with Negroes. I been living with them all my life. I know what they want." Short eventually agreed, moving his officers off of Wheeler Avenue and back to Tierwester Street. As they approached the dorms, Lawson recalled:

Girls inside the dormitory yelled affably at Rev. Kirkpatrick. Boys in the driveway between the Student Union Building and the Men's Dormitory shouted at us terms of brotherly acceptance. Several of the more vocal students, obviously in hopes that the police had gone, came to the front walk where the three of us stood. One of us began to report to them that the Chief seemed to be moving the officers and the cars.⁹⁰

Things calmed significantly enough that campus police officer W. T. Adams, who was scheduled to be on duty a few hours later for his work shift, left the scene with the blessing

of his colleagues Sergeant Butler and Officer Milton Laberier. Lawson assured the students that the conflict “was all over” and convinced many of them to turn in for the night. Kirkpatrick and Moody, then, attempted to talk to some of the students, among them probably Franklin Alexander, who remained agitated. Despite the calm the ministers brought with them, “it was obvious to them and to us,” Lawson stated, “that they [the officers] were not leaving the vicinity, only the front of the dormitory.” The students’ simplified demand for the night was for Short to close off Wheeler Avenue to traffic, which he said was not in his power to do. The chief refused to call the mayor for permission to close the street, as well. The students, frustrated, decided to close the street themselves, yelling, “Let’s light up the street,” throwing construction material in the street, and rolling a barrel of tar into the thoroughfare, setting it on fire with gunshots.⁹¹

Perhaps believing that students were again shooting at officers, or maybe just frustrated with what must have appeared to be insubordination on the part of the students to him, Chief Short ordered officers: “Goddamn it, clean this place up!” Lawson observed as “[a]lready anxious police forces, either assuming that the shots were aimed at them, or needing an excuse to attack, prepared to besiege the area.” Then, in a boisterous approach, “[h]undreds of police began pouring thousands of rounds of rifle, pistol, submachine-gun, and riot-gun fire into the dormitories.” During the police assault, a police officer’s indiscriminately fired bullet ricocheted off a surface and killed Officer Louis Raymond Kuba, who suffered a fatal “gunshot wound of the head.”⁹² Lawson, finding himself abandoned by the other ministers and bewildered by Short’s sudden directive in what he felt was a de-escalating situation, described the scene on Wheeler Avenue:

In a split second of panic one sees many things—the empty street (Wheeler) is cold and shelterless and the officers are young, inexperienced, and excited. Inside the dormitories, hundreds of students were unaware of the danger they faced. A few, whom no one could locate, were armed, angry, and well-entrenched. Across the

street, a massive parking lot, vacated of the day's load of traffic and affording no barricades was filled with the rush of many feet and the sounds of hundreds of police officers being sent unshielded into a potentially dangerous target area—their one alternative was to approach the crowded dormitories at high gallop and shooting as they ran. Hundreds of high-powered ammunitions belched forth from over 600 guns in volley as the police swiss-cheesed the fronts of both dormitories. Scattered shots from inside the dormitories came back. The officers flitted and zig-zagged in erratic and undisciplined patterns. One officer was shot by a fellow policemen. Seeing themselves in a ridiculously unshielded position they dashed to cover under the dormitory. Bullets ricocheted wildly off walls and trees. One young officer spurted blood from the forehead as a heavy gauge bullet from somewhere pierced his face between the eyes. It may never be known whether the bullet was a buddy's or his own. A rookie companion went berserk, firing his riot gun aimlessly, crying like a child, and being carried away by the medics in a state of shock. The face of Chief Short was a mask of confusion as he watched his men attempting to carry out an ill-conceived assignment to attack a dormitory of adolescents like a military bastion.⁹³

As the bullets poured into the dormitories, an officer grabbed Lawson, placed him in a squad car, and rushed him to City Hall. There, he and Kirkpatrick were escorted to Chief Short's office, where Welch, a "covey of reporters," and the chief himself were attempting to understand—or concoct a narrative about—the violence that was still unfolding on the campus.⁹⁴

Short's absence probably exacerbated the undisciplined nature of the assault on the dorms, which could have been much bloodier than it was. For instance, at one point, as officers emptied the Junior-Senior dorm of its residents, an officer asked a student how to access the roof of the building. V. J. Hollins remembered that this officer made it to the roof, and the over-zealous cops below, unaware that the man on the roof was one of their own, "started firing at him."⁹⁵

Sometime after the bullets stopped flying, close to 1:00, Alvin Johnson peered out of his window to see a group of heavily armed police officers converging on his building from around the corner of the Student Union building on its Wheeler Avenue side. Students yelled down the balcony, trying to inform others that the police were coming, that they

were armed, and that if anyone had been shooting from the building earlier they should not try a reprise. One student asked others to leave their rooms to show the officers that they were not armed, but when they exited their rooms “the police started shooting again.” Johnson ducked back into his room, but he wasn’t safe. “About that time about eleven shots were fired in our room,” he testified. “Bullets ricocheting off walls, so we ran into the bathroom. Upon doing this, bullets came through the study area window into the bathroom, so we just laid on the floor. About 15 or 20 minutes later the police started storming into the dorms. We had heard them coming up the steps, so we immediately began to dress. After we had dressed, they came in, kicked open the door and ordered us out.”⁹⁶

Likewise according to Leroy Lewis, in the early morning hours of May 17th, as police barraged Lanier Hall and the Junior Senior dorm with indiscriminately fired bullets, he jerked out of sleep and he and Clarence Harper fled to their bathroom, where they remained for “about an hour”—the only place that seemed safe from the projectiles. Howard Williams saw the assault coming from his perch in Jones Hall. Officers moved in the hundreds, stalking Lanier Hall for Men and the Junior-Senior dorm from the west by crossing the track field, and from the east by marching along paths leading from Lanier Hall for Women to the men’s dormitories. Student David Harrington, resident of Lanier Hall for Men, reported officers shooting from across Wheeler Avenue where the Science Hall stood. Harrington learned that his brother had been shot in the Junior-Senior dorm, and attempted to escape Lanier Hall through a window, since the onslaught made it impossible to get to the front exit of the dormitory. While climbing out, he was also shot. He ran to a friend, who took him downstairs in Lanier Hall to Mrs. Harbert. The dorm matron attempted to call a nurse, but before she could, she and the students dove to the floor in order to avoid a new bombardment of bullets pouring into the building. When police came

in and saw Harrington's wound, the student asked to see a doctor, but the officer instead stomped on his arm, "right where the wound was," and told him, "You're probably one of those niggers that shot the policeman."⁹⁷

Many other students reported similar stories: intermittent gunfire early in the night, followed by quiet and calm around 1:00, that calm interrupted by rapid, indiscriminate fire around 2:00, culminating with a police riot in the men's dormitories. One undergraduate resident of the Junior-Senior dorm, Gerald Barnes, arrived on campus around 12:30 in the morning. He had taken a cab to the Continental Bowling Lane at the corner of Scott Street and Cleburne Street, about three-tenths of a mile east of TSU's edge. Walking west toward campus for about three minutes, Barnes met a police barricade at the intersection of Canfield and Cleburne streets. An officer asked for his identification and his destination. Barnes identified himself as a student, although his only proof was his "TSU mealbook." After verifying that the young man was a student and on his way to his dormitory, the officer advised Barnes: "I wouldn't advise you to go in because an officer just got shot." Without any place else to go and with the officer advising him not to try to sleep outside in a car, the student continued his walk toward campus, stopping at a friend's apartment on the way to see if he could stay the night. Unfortunately, the friend's place was already packed. Barnes finally made it to the dorm, then, shortly after 12:30.⁹⁸

His roommate, Sidney Goode, had also recently arrived from a shift at Hermann Hospital. The two remained oblivious as to the events that had transpired. Between the time of their arrival and the time they went to sleep—about forty-five minutes later following Barnes's shower—they "heard some shooting," but not enough to frighten them. Barnes went to bed and the next thing he remembered was hearing officers at his door commanding him to "get up." Assuming students were playing pranks, he stayed in bed for

another five minutes until he heard more beating on his door and an order to open it.

“When I opened the door,” he recalled, “here was a white fellow with a gun in his hand, police officer, shaking like a leaf on a tree with a .45 in his hand—nickel-plated, telling me to get back.” This lone officer appeared wholly unprepared, and frightened. Goode had been asleep throughout the ordeal, until Barnes told him to wake up.⁹⁹

The officer then noticed a locker in the room and said, “Open the locker up and get that gun out.” Barnes replied, “I don’t have any gun in that locker.” And besides, Barnes continued, “I can’t. I don’t have the key.” The officer inquired about the key’s location and the young man told him that it was in the pillow. The shaking cop commanded him to grab the key, but Barnes refused, “No, you get it man, because you’re scared; you want to shoot somebody.” The officer replied, “You know something, boy, you’re smart.” The officer found the key and then commanded Barnes again to open the locker. Barnes remained still, “No, I’m not going to open it because you’re scared; you want to shoot somebody, you open it.” The anxious officer struggled to open the locker and failed, saying he couldn’t open it. Barnes replied, “You know what, you got a problem; that’s your business.” Again, the officer replied, “You’re a smart nigger,” before commanding him to go outside. Barnes walked out onto the third-floor balcony, and when the officer gestured to search him, Barnes replied that there was no need to since he was in pajamas. The young man defiantly removed his shirt and tossed it back into the bedroom, prompting the officer, who probably felt disrespected, to yell to a fellow downstairs that Barnes was “a smart nigger—the tall one.” The officer sent Barnes down on the south side of the Junior-Senior dorm to his waiting partner who attacked the student’s leg with a nightstick. There, Barnes also saw police forcing students from Jones Hall, the athletic dormitory.¹⁰⁰

One of them was James “Jimmy” Burroughs, a white swimmer from Detroit. Barnes observed Burroughs get “kneed in the groin and hit in the side” by police. While in jail, officers asked Burroughs “was he a half-breed or something... because he was with us Negroes.” Though the officers interrogated all of the students with disgust, according to student Shelton Dotson, they seemed to find Burroughs especially repugnant. The University’s investigative committee noted that Burroughs “was beaten extensively by the police because he is a ‘white’ student.” Another athlete, football player McNorris, had been forced from his room without crutches, hopping as he was forced out of the dorm, hoping not to further injure his broken leg. He remembered that officers made him lie on the ground between the two dorms in a crowd of students who were mostly dressed in their night clothes. Over in Lanier Hall, officers threw Charles Criner and his roommate out of their room. They stumbled haphazardly down the hallway, lined on both sides by police officers on one side of the walkway. Dogs nipped at them as police officers hit them in the back, “kinda like an initiation or something.” Criner did his best to avoid the blows, but was more concerned about the glass that littered the floor under his shoeless feet.¹⁰¹

Eventually, police directed Barnes and the other students laying between Jones Hall and the Junior Senior dormitory to join the rest of the prostrate students in front of Lanier Hall. Barnes witnessed more police beatings, and the mistreatment of Mrs. Harbert, who had been commanded to “lie down like everyone else,” after which police “walked up and down her back,” as they had done to students throughout the night. Barbee noted that officers were “actually stepping on [students’] heads and arms.” “They knew that they were stepping on them,” he testified, “but they just kept on.” Barnes noticed at least one officer allowing his canine to bite students. When one student tried to step out of line to get away from the dog, another officer commanded him to return. The student complained about the

dog biting him, and finally Barnes saw his first hint of professionalism: the officer commanded the cop with the dog to restrain the animal.¹⁰²

Hayward McKursson had a similar testimony. He made it back onto campus around 1:00, walking directly to his room on the first floor of the Junior-Senior dorm. Before he made it inside, “the police put a spotlight” on him and commanded him to get in the building. Then, without warning, the police “opened up and started shooting” toward the moving target. Dodging the projectiles, McKursson scurried up to the second-floor TV room. Police continued shooting up the building, he said, until they began their final march toward the dorm. When they entered the TV room, they told McKursson to put his hands up and then one of them “promptly hit [McKursson] across the back with his shotgun and said, ‘Can’t you move any faster, nigger?’”¹⁰³

Robert Lewis had fallen to sleep in his bed after the noise had quieted down around that 1:00 hour. But no sooner than he had fully drifted off that he began hearing “shotgun shots, machine guns, and people hollering, girls screaming, and about that time I heard somebody kick on the door and say, ‘All you black mother-fuckers come out here or I’ll blow your damn head off.’” The roommates remembered the officers using the demeaning language without provocation, calling them “niggers,” “sons-of-bitches,” “mother-fuckers,” and “damn niggers.” Lewis, disoriented, recalled police kicking in the door before six police officers stormed into the room and ordered the students in the room to stay still or he would immediately kill them. Lewis gestured to put on his pants and an officer aimed at him with a gun. After searching the closet for any hiding residents, the officers ordered the nearly naked men out of their room, “beating us all on the butts” with their nightsticks. “It’s fortunate I didn’t get hit on the head,” Lewis noted. Looking for a reason to shed more blood, the officers attempted to goad Lewis into “provoking” them to fire: “And they kept

saying run nigger run but I never did run.” Like other students, Lewis was marched out of the door, and forced to lay on the dewy ground in front of Lanier Hall, while officers continued to ravage the dorms with axes. He remembered being told that if students talked the officers threatened “they would blow your damn head off.”¹⁰⁴

James Young had been forced to lay down in the middle of the growing carpet of student bodies in front of Lanier Hall for Men, and was thereby insulated from the snarling police dogs, flying nightsticks, and thrusting shotgun butts. The slightest infraction provoked the police to attack the students as they laid vulnerably on the ground—a head raised too far off the ground or even a question. An officer told John Booker, “Eat dirt nigger,” when he saw the student’s head raised off the ground. The cop “came by and hit me on the head with the nightstick,” Booker recalled. “So, I just ate dirt.” Clarence Hall remembered how often he and the other students moved their hands in order to scratch themselves, saying, “You couldn’t help but scratch because different stuff was crawling on you, with bugs and things you couldn’t help but scratch.” The officers responded by addressing them as “niggers,” commanding them to keep their hands on their heads, and reinforcing their orders with kicks. Once outside, Oscar McNair, also an undergraduate, saw dogs biting “a number of people” before he was forced to the ground. “When an investigator asked Lewis if the officers came to the dorms “peacefully,” Lewis responded: “Well, it’s according to how you define peacefully; if there’s peace in hell, well I would say so.” V. J. Hollins expressed the same sentiment, saying of the police that, “They acted like savages.”¹⁰⁵

Lewis and Harper did not have much in the way of valuable possessions in their room, but their room was in shambles when they returned from jail the next evening. They found clothes strewn across the floor and a broken tape recorder thrown from the closet, and noted \$72 stolen from Harper’s pants pocket. James Young’s roommate also reported

that officers had stolen his money. Officers also absconded with the \$70 V. J. Hollins had saved for summer school through his work-study job. In the athletic dormitory, officers stole cash from several of the men there, including \$152 from Howard Williams, \$127 from Ivory Black, and \$200 from an unnamed student. Barnes remembered that police officers had “smashed” a Remington typewriter and reported that some people found that officers had ruined their clothes with “ink and bleach.” Fortunately, Leroy Lewis’s musical instruments—he and Harper were band members of the TSU Toronadoes—had been spared. Some officers, it appeared, had tried to restore a sense of professionalism through the officers’ search for weapons in the student rooms. At least one officer vocally objected to his fellow officers’ vandalism. On the ground level of the Junior-Senior dorm, the unnamed cop yelled at one of his colleagues who was up on the second or third floor, knocking out dorm room windows with a trash can. He told him, “We didn’t come up here to tear up these kids’ stuff; we came here to break this mess up.” The other officer, however, continued the destruction until the objecting one climbed the stairs and took the garbage can from his hand, tossing it to the ground below.¹⁰⁶

Madison Tyler said police entered his dorm room on the third floor of the Junior-Senior dorm around 2:30 that morning, commanding the occupants: “Come out, niggers.” He and nine other students had holed up in his room during the police bombardment. While being removed from his room, other than the racial epithet, Tyler said he was not assaulted by the officers. However, he did suffer a brutal attack outside. He and his fellow occupants had been commanded to stand on the third floor balcony until the officers had cleared out the other rooms. While waiting for further commands, Tyler heard an officer on the ground say, “Hey you, nigger, up there.” The student looked down and then turned. The officer continued, “I’m talking to you.” Tyler responded, “I’m no nigger, me.” The

officer replied, “You’re one of those smart niggers.” Tyler, insisted on being respected, saying, “I’ll tell you again, I’m no nigger.” The officer then assured the young man: “I’m going to remember you; when you come down here I got something for you.” When Tyler finally made his way down to the ground floor he said he “never saw it coming”: “I got hit, and when I woke up again I was on the ground with blood all over my face.” Alvin Johnson did see it coming, noting that after Tyler had been knocked unconscious by the blow, officers turned him over and told him to put his hand over his head. Likely suffering a concussion, Tyler could not respond to their requests and when he tried to speak he failed. The officers then dragged his body out of the way of the staircase and left him there bleeding.¹⁰⁷

Tyler could not recall how long he had been laying on the ground—unconscious and then afterward. But, he remembered being placed in one cell with all of the students who had been injured around 3:30 in the morning—he guessed this was “the clinic.” One man attended to their wounds—although attended would be a generous way to describe the treatment. The man looked at Tyler’s head, said, “Oh, you got a cut up here, huh?” Then he rubbed “a little rag all around it” and moved on to the next student. Four students, he remembered, had stitches, and one suffered a fractured arm, requiring a visit to the hospital.¹⁰⁸

Facing such undiscerning violence at the hands of police officers, many students later articulated great distress at what had happened to them. They had been uninvolved in any protests. Many had been studying for exams. Most had probably never been in any trouble with law enforcement officials. Yet, they were all accused, tried, and sentenced that night by the police force. Undergraduate Shelton Dotson, who had slept through the entire crisis, felt disoriented and sick when he woke up to find a gun in his face. By the time he made it to the jail, he was suffering from a head injury that “was bleeding quite badly.” He remained

oblivious through the early morning, unaware of what he and the others had been charged with, but certain that they had all been transformed into criminals by the police force merely because of their presence in the dorms:¹⁰⁹

Well, I don't know who was charged with anything, but they treated us like real criminals, you know, they weren't too nice about it and used real harsh words, and they took our pictures like we were real prisoners, giving us numbers, took our profile, took our fingerprints, thumbs, index fingers, just like we was—you know—hardened criminals.¹¹⁰

The undiscerning dehumanization of all of the people in the men's dormitories frightened Dotson and other students, who believed that as long as they were compliant citizens and good students, they had no need to fear police officers.¹¹¹ As a result of the malicious police actions, Lawson speculated that “the hundreds of students... scattered on the floor like a bizarre game of pick-up sticks must also have wondered whether their lives would be ended by the angry men in blue whom they learned in kindergarten were children's friends.” That night some students learned a new lesson: that race and space, not action, could define who was a threat to law and order in the eyes of police officers.¹¹²

This was as true for black students as it was for the few white students who attended TSU that semester. The attack on James Burroughs was particularly brutal for the young swimmer, who said he was “attacked and brutally beaten by six officers of the law” around 2:30 in the morning as they forced him out of the athletic dormitory. The officers' disdain for desegregation may have made them particularly violent toward Burroughs and the other white male students they found on the campus. These students' mere presence in the student dormitories was an affront to white supremacy. It suggested social equality, and any upstanding white man would know better than to ever make such a suggestion to black people. Burroughs, they concluded, was a traitor and a deviant, operating outside of proper racial and gender norms, and the officers charged, sexual ones as well. Therefore, the white

students needed to be beaten back to sensibility—warned to stay in their place, as much as the black students needed to be contained in theirs. To cross over was to betray the white race. The officers, then, seemed to take particularly delight in their attempts to properly re-socialize students like Burroughs back to whiteness, and particularly straight male whiteness, according to Burroughs himself:¹¹³

The beating administered to me by these officers was definitely uncalled for. I was not resisting arrest. They beat me to a state of shock and fear so that I, after it was over, lost over 15 pounds in 3 to 4 days and was very ill for a period of not less than two to three weeks. The language and treatment I received on campus and in jail was not befitting a dog, little less a human being.

Beating number 1: I was beaten with night sticks and pushed down cement stairs.

Beating number 2: I was kicked in the groin and vigorously beaten with night sticks. I was also kicked on other parts of my body. I received most of the blows on my back except for being punctured in the ribs with the double barrel of a shot gun, which left prints for over two weeks.

I received these blows mainly because I was White and those officers were prejudiced and filled with hatred.

The incidents that took place in jail were like a horrible nightmare. I was given food not fit for dogs; they made slanderous statements pertaining to my character by telling me I was a homosexual prostitute for the race of “Nigger Athletes.” This is only one of their low degrading statements.¹¹⁴

By existing in a black space but out of place—that is, out of the seat of white male supremacy—Burroughs became illegible to the white police officers so invested in maintaining their own place in Houston’s racial-gender hierarchy. They effectively accused him of two crimes—the sex trade, of course, but also of homosexuality, which was a criminal offense in Texas. Though they did not formally charge him in a court—they had no evidence and it would have been unprecedented—they passed their own judgement and accordingly meted out their own punishment against Burroughs.

Another white student who preferred to remain anonymous, but who was living in the Junior-Senior dorm as an exchange student from the University of Wisconsin, described

similar abuses. He had been in his dorm room through the conflict and the police assault. He and his roommates, Burroughs and another white student named Walter P. Fontenot, dove to the floor when the rapid gunfire began, and once the bullets stopped and the officers began shouting their way through the dorms, they “crawled into the bathroom for protection.” The two officers who found the hiding young students “came in with raised shotguns, shocked (at the fact that we were white) and stated, “Well, what have we got here?” The student felt that “[t]heir demeanor suggested that they were obviously having fun.”¹¹⁵

The officers forced the student and his roommate outside, hitting them on the way out of the door. On the ground below, the three students, not fully clothed and cold, continued to suffer racialized taunting as they laid on the wet grass like the black students. One police officer looked over them with a flashlight and said, “Oh gee, look at the poor white.” When the officers finally prepared to move them into the police wagon for transport to jail, one “wallop[ed]” the student “on the side of [his] head with a club” causing him to see “stars.” At jail, like Burroughs, he suffered interrogation and accusations about his sexuality, referring to the black male athletes as his “associates.” One detective “lectured” him about the “error” of such association, while several others, the student recalled, “advised us that if they ever caught us on the TSU campus again, they would kill us.” White supremacy was so contingent on using black space to delineate black people’s place in the social order that even white people, when not “appropriately” placed in a black setting, necessarily symbolized deviance. These “scum of the earth... nigger lovers” were as much a threat to white supremacy as were the advocates of black power. Out-of-place white bodies, when confronted by police in a black space, too became subject to the criminal-producing machinations of an anti-black law enforcement system.¹¹⁶

If heteronormative gender and sexual convictions placed even white men at risk in black spaces, police officers certainly rendered no respect to the black women they interacted with during the early morning hours of May 17th. As had happened the previous day at Northwood, the police officers particularly targeted the male students, and no female students reported being abused that night by police officers. But this probably had as much to do with the ways black, male bodies are read as “appropriate sites for public violence” as with the paternalistic treatment of female students on campus by administration and staff. Early in the night, sometime between 10:30 and 11:00, most likely, the matrons of the women’s dormitories had ordered all of the female students inside. From their windows, they watched the conflict between the male students and the police officers. When the final police assault began, and the bullets began raining on the men’s dormitory, the women became distraught. One student recalled, “The girls were all upset because of the way they were treating the fellows, just like they were hardened criminals.” Watching from the periphery, these young women witnessed the transformation of their campus into a makeshift penitentiary, and charged that it was a consequence of the police officers’ actions, and not those of the male students. As the officers charged past the women’s dorms and Student Union to empty the men’s residences, the agitated female students “started yelling at the policemen, telling them what they thought of them.” The language probably included profanity and racial slurs aimed at the officers. The policemen responded by returning racist and misogynistic slurs and shooting “three times into the first floor door” of Lanier Hall for Women before aiming their weapons at the girls in the second floor windows.¹¹⁷

Over in Lanier Hall for Men, shortly after 1:00, Mrs. Harbert had failed to get medical help for David Harrington because the bullets “zipping” into the building and ricocheting off of walls made it unsafe. She and several students had managed to crawl into

an interior hallway on the first floor, where they hoped the bullets wouldn't pierce. When "the firing ceased," she recalled, "the floor was flooded with lights."¹¹⁸ The silhouettes of police officers and canines rushed forward:

Epithets were spat at those students who laid on the floor. Those in the basement studying for finals were ricked across the hall, one person pushed from one flight of stairs to the other. One awakened with bites from police dog in his bed. We were called everything from "S.O.B.'s" to "God D--- Niggers," M.F.'s, "Bitches," Mau-Mau S.O.B.'s. Rifle butts and bullets were [shot] without restraint. Students were hustled from beds with the canine force reinforcing the police orders to get out of bed. Again billies and rifle butts come into action. Students were brutalized, rooms were vandalized. There is no possible estimate of the personal property destroyed. Then they hustled me out of the office, along with other students there. Made me lie down in the hallway and on the sidewalk during the melee, I was trampled on, I have since been hospitalized for back injury, and at present I am still under the care of a doctor with a back injury. My own personal property, which included a sewing machine and electronic iron, a television, a coffee urn, a linen two-piece dress, a pair of gloves, a bottle of cologne. I was treated very hostile. Having tried to announce myself to present a passkey to rooms, I was told to keep my mouth shut and get on the floor with the rest... having my right as a dormitory hostess or house mother and as a taxpaying citizen being abused.¹¹⁹

Officers finally allowed Mrs. Harbert off of the ground outside the dorms around 4:00. Back in the dormitory, for the next three hours, she witnessed "a man in a white coverall suit with an instrument similar to an ax," several police officers, and a person with a "large camera"—probably a news photographer—destroy the dormitory. They chopped and kicked down doors, despite that Mrs. Harbert had a master key for the rooms, and ransacked hers and the students' possessions. Refusing to admit that they had caused any damage to possessions in the dormitories, the officers justified their evacuation and search as an effort to find a stockpile of weapons they suspected students of using—a hoard of firearms that they never uncovered. Instead, they found only one shotgun, two .22 caliber handguns, and a few wicks for Molotov cocktails. Perhaps it was gender, age, occupation, or something else that helped Mrs. Harbert escape arrest that early morning, but she certainly

remained vulnerable as the cadre of white men, armed and undisciplined, abused her charges and destroyed the place she called home.¹²⁰

When the sun brought light to the destruction at TSU, the bullet holes, broken windows, and destroyed personal property could be read as hieroglyphs, a story of the horror that the students at TSU faced that night. However, by and large, white Houstonians failed to learn the sequence of events or the severity of the police violence. Their physical distance from TSU, their social distance from black Houstonians, and their reliance on a white press that manufactured informational distance helped to mainstream support for the police and condemnation of the students and campus administration. Indeed, in Houston and elsewhere, moments like the siege at TSU illustrated how the maintenance of racialized space was pivotal to the preservation of the white supremacist social order. As Jim Crow faded and the 1950s turned to the 1960s and 1970s, darkening cities and sprawling white suburbs and exurbs partitioned the landscape of the United States, helping white citizens retain socioeconomic distance from black ones by separating the populations through the machinations of political geography. In Houston, the urban-suburban dichotomy was not as pronounced, but as one reporter learned, black Houstonians still lived apart from their white counterparts, and black neighborhoods, whether rural, suburban, or urban were viewed as “nigger-towns” and “foreign.” White Americans looked toward the black spaces they created and maintained as areas of social dysfunction, civil unrest, poverty, and criminality. As the 1960s stretched into the 1970s, by and large white Americans abandoned the War on Poverty—which Houstonians had only tentatively engaged to begin with—and instead embraced a War on Crime, intentionally designed as a war on black people.¹²¹

Thus, white citizens could easily buy the police and mayor's narrative about the events at TSU, and police officers could continue to work for the department, unpunished for their actions. Liberal individualism allowed them to rationalize the racialized social stratification that clearly evinced a lack of equal opportunity in the city of Houston but which they reasoned was a consequence of black inferiority. Racial segregation provided them with ample distance from which to observe and critique black people and the spaces they occupied. The associations of race with space and crime made it obvious that the police and city administration were telling the truth about Kuba's death, on which they blamed student snipers—as well as the stories they concocted about students wantonly destroying their own possessions that night. Bill Lawson hinted at these same conclusions, writing:

I have read the news accounts which have glorified the Mayor, the Police Chief, and the Police for heroic military action and given exaggerated condemnation of the Texas Southern Administration and Student Body. In a world where Black is so wrong we wear our villainy well—there must be good guys. But I wonder, if my son should go to Rice [University], and boisterous students create deportment problems in the dormitories, would he ever see Will Rice College [dormitories] look like Lanier Hall for Men?¹²²

Lawson would not have had to look far to find the answer to his question. When male students at Rice exploded a bomb at a University dormitory in 1950, police officers concluded that it was merely an “overdone... prank.” When, a few days later, Houston police learned that three male students from Rice had placed bombs at two different homes in the Houston area, they believed the young men's claim that “they would have known the danger of the type of bomb put in East Hall.” The police admitted that they “pretty well knew” who placed the bomb in the Rice dormitory, but “left the matter up to school authorities” because it seemed to be a matter of freshmen and sophomore class rivalries. Rice was not a place where students committed crimes; boys will be boys, the investigators

concluded. That these actions were perpetrated by white men mitigated what would otherwise have been, at least, an act of criminal mischief if committed by black people. Predominantly white spaces certainly did not require the militarized assault that TSU endured on the night of May 16th. Unlike whiteness, blackness was a threat to law and order and the state had an obligation, therefore, to limit the social, economic, and political mobility of black people, lest they disrupt that order. During the interrogations after the violence at TSU, one white student recalled a conversation with police: "I asked one officer if he were prejudiced; he replied to the effect that no, he wasn't prejudiced; he just didn't like people who 'did things wrong, and since all Negroes did things wrong, he just had to hate them all.'" The social distance perpetuated by educational and residential segregation made these kinds of anti-black stereotypes possible, and sustained the condemnation of blackness even after Jim Crow's demise.¹²³

An editorial in the *San Antonio News* shamed the Houston Police Department for their actions. Though most newspapers were still spreading misinformation about the death of Kuba and the sequences of events that night, the editorialist maintained that there was "utterly no excuse for police officers to respond" by destroying the dormitories. "Police are supposed to have competent training and leadership," the editorialist commented. "The effective work of a good police force is supposed to make the cure less destructive than the disease... *A riot by police officers is intolerable and utterly inexcusable.*" The officers' failures to protect the innocent students in the dorm, much less to find any culprits or stockpile of weapons, made their actions all the more unbelievable to those who considered what could have potentially been a massacre. And, indeed, if a riot did take place on campus that night, it occurred after Chief Short ordered his officers to seize the campus. At least one officer reportedly implied as much. When police forced Harold Williams, who had a cigarette in his

mouth, out of his room on the second floor of Lanier Hall, one officer commanded him to remove the cigarette, saying, “Nigger, take that cigarette out of your mouth; if you want a riot, we’ll give you a riot.” One student looked back on the events and said, “It was like a nightmare; they [the police] were just waiting to shoot somebody.” Lawson confirmed, concluding that the police violence constituted “a morning of unbelievable horror.”¹²⁴

Residential segregation, a history of municipal negligence, long-standing patterns of police brutality, hate crimes committed by white Houstonians, and silence about all of these in the white press had effectively isolated black Houstonians at TSU and elsewhere around the city from the resources they needed to protect them. That is, residential segregation was resource segregation. This lack of protection, with its racial, gender, and sexual contours, exposed different kinds of black people to different but multiple and sometimes overlapping geographies of risk. By the late 1960s, some black Houstonians, like those in the Friends of SNCC, had transitioned their struggle for equal rights out of courtrooms and into the streets where, in the previous decade, they had won many battles to bring about Jim Crow’s demise. Hopeful, but also dismayed by the slow progress toward social, political, and economic integration, these young activists demanded quicker results, and used bustling national networks created by civil rights organizations like SNCC and the NAACP to connect local movements with each other. Across these networks, people, knowledge, and strategies for resistance flowed. Whatever promise “Heavenly Houston” offered to black people, through these networks black Houstonians could learn that they could demand better from their municipal and state leaders, and so they did. Their activism was met with surveillance, political arrests, and containment, with a sprinkle of acquiescence from political leaders like Welch who understood that his re-election and the city’s economic growth depended on the appearance of racial progress and tranquility. Young activists decried the

kind of tokenism couched in individualism that Welch and other white Houstonians were willing to offer. They understood that the institutions that structured their lives as black citizens were not blind to color, and therefore they refused to let the strictest individualists—white and black—to evade the issue of race. The city administration would not tolerate these activists' adamant refusals to know their prescribed place, and in doing so, molded the conditions for the conflict at TSU. In the years that followed, city leaders relented to some of the demands of black Houstonians—closing the Holmes Road Dump and the stretch of Wheeler Avenue that bifurcated TSU's campus, for example. But, with the backing of the police department, the mayor, and the white press, District Attorney Carol Vance ensured that black Houstonians would remain frustrated by the legal system. Though charges against most of the nearly 500 students who were arrested were dropped, for the next three years Vance worked to prosecute the TSU Five—John Parker, Trazawell Franklin, Douglas Wayne Waller, Floyd Nichols, and Charles Freeman—on charges of murder and assault to murder for the death of Kuba under an anti-rioting statute. And Houston's commitment to residential segregation remained.¹²⁵

Notes

¹ Bill Helmer, "Nightmare in Houston," *The Texas Observer*, June 23, 1967, Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland; "TSU Students Statement of Personal Injury or Intimidation," n.d., Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland. Despite HPD's failure to fatally shoot any students, character assassinations of the entire student body would dot the pages of the *Houston Post* and *Houston Chronicle* in the following weeks.

² Helmer, "Nightmare in Houston"; Carter Wesley, "Conspiracies?," *Houston Informer*, June 13, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

³ William B. Oliver III and Members, Houston Subcommittee, Texas State Advisory Committee, "Review of Bob Greenwald's Field Reports on Houston," August 11, 1967, Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

⁴ Larry Lee, "Police Quell Major Riot At University in Houston," *Nashua [NH] Telegraph*, May 17, 1967, 8.

⁵ Nearly all historians who have written about the so-called TSU Riot have failed to do much better than

reproduce this narrative, albeit with varying degrees of empathy toward the students, campus administrators, and police department. Bernard Friedberg's 1969 recounting of the violence is perhaps the most widely cited and well-known, but his is hardly a work of scholarship. None of the narrative he presents was sourced, making it impossible to make sense out of his vague interpretations of the precipitating events, such as when he wrote: "A student was arrested on the TSU campus. The arrest was made by two plainclothes policemen who were on campus as a precautionary measure." In Friedberg's account, the student goes unnamed and the nature of the precaution undisclosed. Brian Behnken's account is much more reliable. He uses a few research collections from local archives in Houston, namely the Brode Family Collection and the VISTA Collection at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center (HMRC) and makes use all of the city's major and minor newspapers, including the *Chronicle*, *Post*, *Tribune*, *Informer*, and *Forward Times*. He also supports some of his claims, such as the existence of police spies on campus, with oral history interviews he conducted in the early 2000s. However, most of his sources reflect the general popular narrative about TSU as a student riot, and in a few rare instances Behnken fails to provide evidence for claims. For instance he asserts, "Sniper fire from Lanier Hall... wounded Officer Robert G. Blaylock of the CID in the leg, which escalated the unrest." Students, as I demonstrate later in the chapter, would have interpreted those events differently. For one, there is no evidence that the gunshot came from Lanier Hall or that there were any "snipers" in the dormitories on campus. Secondly, many students explicitly stated that Blaylock's own actions escalated tensions on campus. Two studies of the history of the Houston Police Department also tackle the event. Dwight Watson's summary of the TSU riot is perhaps the most often cited after Friedberg's. Watson acknowledges that the police were particularly cantankerous, citing interviews with prominent campus figures like Bill Lawson, Mack Jones, and Barbara Jones. However, he makes several unsourced claims about causality and relationships. For example, he claims that after the firing of Professor Mack Jones, faculty advisor to SNCC, more students were "prompted" to "activism in the wider Houston community." This is not quite clear from the available evidence. Mitchel Roth and Tom Kennedy's "story of the Houston Police Department" was commissioned by the Houston Police Officer's Union and is rife with interpretive and factual errors. They claim that, "In May 1967, black leaders from outside generated an atmosphere of racial unrest, particularly around the [TSU] campus..." This was not the case (and unsourced), but probably in step with what they had learned from the oral history interviews, all of which, save for Bill Lawson's, they conducted with police officers and their sympathizers. They claim that protests in north Houston were prompted by "false rumors of an African-American juvenile being shot by a white man," but protests were actually in response to unfair treatment at Northwood Junior High School. They also claim that "Chief Short direct officers to fire only when fired upon and only above the building or directly at a known source of gunfire," which, again, is not evidenced in any of the sources I have read nor any that the writers cite. Within a few pages, they say that Officer Louis Kuba, who suffered one gunshot wound that night, was shot above his right eyes and between the eyes. They conclude by writing, "Cries of racism and police brutality became common, obscuring the fact that Houston was the only American city experiencing a one-fatality race riot." These accounts, then, characteristically fail to place the violence at TSU in its long historical, local context. Black Houstonians had been protesting racism and police brutality for over a century by this point, and the lack of fatalities was not for lack of trying on the part of the police officers. Moreover, if this was indeed a "race riot" it could not be compared to contemporaneous urban uprisings, as Kennedy and Roth attempt. The incident had much more in common with the white terrorist mobs that massacred black people in East St. Louis in 1917, attacked them in Chicago in 1919, and burned down their independent businesses in Tulsa in 1921. Most other accounts are sparing in their detail and rely almost entirely on these aforementioned studies and a scattering of *Chronicle* stories. William McCord et al., *Life Styles in the Black Ghetto* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969), 42; Brian D. Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles: Mexican Americans, African Americans, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 158; Watson, *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990*, 81; Roth and Kennedy, *Houston Blue*, 208–12; also see William S. Clayson, *Freedom Is Not Enough: The War on Poverty and the Civil Rights Movement in Texas*, Reprint edition (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011), 167–68; Charles E. Jones, "Arm Yourself or Harm Yourself: People's Party II and the Black Panther Party in Houston, Texas," in *On the Ground: The Black Panther Party in Communities across America*, ed. Judson L. Jeffries (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2010), 10–11, 26–33, 159; Wesley G. Phelps, *A People's War on Poverty: Urban Politics and Grassroots Activists in Houston* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014), 99–102; Bush, *Who Gets a*

Childhood?, 134, 147–48.

Save for Malcolm McLaughlin's recent book on urban rebellions in 1967, historians have failed to make use of student depositions, NAACP or SNCC papers, or other sources of student voices, such as their testimonies before the U.S. Senate's Riot Commission. McLaughlin's efforts are most commendable, though a full account of the events preceding and following the police violence at TSU remains to be written. Malcolm McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967: Urban Rebellion in America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

⁶ "[Untitled Testimony]," August 11, 1967, Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.

⁷ In 1873, the Freedman's Aid Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church established Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, continuing the church's tradition of providing educational opportunities to recently emancipated and enfranchised black Americans. James Douglass and Jamal Hasan, "History of Texas Southern University [Brochure]," April 1, 2010, Texas Southern University Digital Collection, HBCU Library Alliance, <http://contentdm.auctr.edu/cdm/ref/collection/TXDC/id/38>. T. M. Fairchild was also secretary of the Friend-in-Need Burial Association in the early 1900s, located at 2518 McKinney Street, the Fairchild Undertaking Company at 2019 Dallas Avenue, and the "supreme treasurer" of a fraternal insurance company in Austin. Mamie Fairchild appears in the 1940 U.S. Census as a resident at 1114 St. Emanuel Street with her husband. Like other well-off Third Warders, the Fairchilds shared a block with neighbors who did not share their economic status. While the Fairchilds' home was valued at \$5,000 (just over \$86,000 today), adjacent homes were valued between \$8 and \$35 (\$138 and \$604, respectively in 2016 dollars). Morrison & Fourmy Directory Co., *Houston City Directory 1919* (Houston: R. L. Polk & Co., n.d.), 69, 428; "New Fraternal Insurance Company Granted a Permit," *Houston Informer*, March 13, 1920, 5; Elneita W. Stewart, "Houston Omegas Host 15th Annual District Meet," *Pittsburgh Courier*, April 26, 1952, 10; Michael R. Heintze, "Black Colleges," *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 12, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/khb01>; "1940 U.S. Federal Population Census (Enumeration District: 258-144, Sheet 8A)" n.d., <http://heritagequestonline.com>. The Fairchild building was plotted on 53 acres that had been donated by oil magnate Hugh Roy Cullen. Benjamin Wermund, "Histories of TSU and UH Marked by Segregation," *Houston Chronicle*, August 21, 2016, <http://www.chron.com/local/history/major-stories-events/article/Houston-s-public-higher-education-history-a-9175498.php>.

⁸ See the Legislative Reference Library of Texas (<http://www.lrl.texas.gov/>) for House Bill 437, House Bill 780, House Joint Resolution 48, and Senate Bill 140 in the 50th Regular Session (1947). House Bill 82 (1951) dropped "for Negroes" from the school name and replaced "State" with "Southern." Douglass and Hasan state that House Bill 788 provided for \$2,000,000 for the establishment of a law school at TSUN and this has often been repeated. However, H. B. 788 is an act clarifying the powers of governing bodies of independent school districts. Douglass and Hasan, "History of Texas Southern University [Brochure]." Rather S.B. 140 provided the financial appropriations for the new school, "\$2,000,000 for land, buildings and equipment, and \$500,000 per annum for maintenance for the biennium ending August 31, 1949." For quote about TSU's attractiveness as a black University, see John S. Lash, "Texas Southern University: From Separation to Special Designation," June 1975, iv, TSU Riot Collection, Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University. On the name change student delegation, see Roshanda Gibbs, "Texas Southern University: A Frontier in Education for Blacks in Houston," *The Texas Historian* 62, no. 3 (February 2002): 2.

⁹ Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999), 1956.

¹⁰ Mary Beth Rogers, *Barbara Jordan: American Hero* (New York: Bantam, 2000), 51; "Dr. O'Hara Lanier's Brain Amazes Psychologists," *Jet*, September 23, 1954, 14.

¹¹ Laverne, *Before Brown*, 238.

¹² Ben Hawkins, "T.S.U. Directors Ignored Evidence on Lanier, Charge Claims," *Houston Chronicle*, August 23, 1953, 1, Mary McLeod Bethune Papers: The Bethune Foundation Collection, Part 2: Correspondence Files, 1914-1955, folder 001390-006-0231, ProQuest History Vault; Ernest Obadele-Starks, "Black Labor,

the Black Middle Class, and Organized Protest along the Upper Texas Gulf Coast, 1883-1945," *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 103, no. 1 (1999): 61; Carter Wesley, "Rice's Revenge," *Houston Informer*, May 3, 1953, sec. 1, 2; Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn," *Houston Informer*, April 25, 1953, sec. 1, 3; Carter Wesley, "Ram's Horn," *Houston Informer*, September 5, 1953, sec. 1, 3 (quote about Ralph Lee).

¹³ "C.W. Rice Target of Angry Charge," *Houston Informer*, April 11, 1953, sec. 1, 1; "Send Letters to Governor," *Houston Informer*, April 18, 1953, sec. 1, 1; Wesley, "Rice's Revenge," 2; "Protest Book Review Ban at Texas Southern U.," *Jet*, April 23, 1953, 14.

¹⁴ Claude A. Barnett to Dr. R. O'Hara Lanier, June 3, 1953, The Claude A. Barnett Papers, 1918-1967, Series 2: Africa and Other Foreign Interests, 1925-1966, folder 252247-187-0006, ProQuest History Vault; Claude A. Barnett to Ben Hawkins, June 3, 1953, The Claude A. Barnett Papers, 1918-1967, Series 2: Africa and Other Foreign Interests, 1925-1966, folder 252247-187-0006, ProQuest History Vault; Carter Wesley, "Rice Sees a Book," *Houston Informer*, May 16, 1953, sec. 1, 3. Wesley spared no words for Rice, writing, "I believe a man ought always be in possession of his own soul, and that the only way he can be is always to be willing to do whatever is necessary to stand for the right and never to get away from it." Unlike Rice, he wrote, "I am not afraid of the bankers and other men of leadership. To me they are just men, and they are no better than they act. He [Rice] makes his living off of them, and he makes his living by trying to please them in every way; I make my living by trying to do what is right every day for the masses of people, and I am not afraid of anybody who wants to call me a Communist. I don't imagine Lanier is afraid of people who want to call him a Communist..." He also referred to Rice as "a slave... of the forced inferiority that we have suffered at the hands of the racial supremacists" for the *Negro Labor News* editor's suggestion that desegregation would be harmful because it would take jobs away from black educators. Carter Wesley, "How They Fish," *Houston Informer*, June 27, 1953, sec. 1, 3; Carter Wesley, "Queer Notions," *Houston Informer*, September 12, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

¹⁵ Carter Wesley took issue with the student tax, noting that "this is something special for TSU" that legislators had made possible. Whereas the state provided for buildings at the University of Texas and Texas A&M from its permanent fund, TSU had been kept "from sharing in the permanent fund." Students at the segregated white institutions, he noted, could enjoy buildings for "free," but black students were "again penalized" and double-taxed. Carter Wesley, "Something Special," *Houston Informer*, May 23, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

¹⁶ "Send Letters to Governor," 1; Wesley, "Ram's Horn," April 25, 1953, 3; "Can TSU Survive?," *Houston Informer*, June 6, 1953, sec. 1, 14. Wesley also reported that a friend told him that someone said, "Wesley always backs up Lanier." He admitted that this was generally the case, and also noted, speaking in the third person, "[I]n every instance where Wesley has backed up Lanier, it has turned out that Wesley was right in the end." Carter Wesley, "Investigation of TSU," *Houston Informer*, July 11, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

¹⁷ Ben Hawkins, "Legion Asks Probe Of T.S.U.," *Houston Chronicle*, June 8, 1953, 1, 14; *ibid.*, 1.

¹⁸ Wesley, "Conspiracies?," 3. Mack Hannah replaced Craig Cullinan as chair after Cullinan resigned from the position. The other eight members of the board in 1951 included Spurgeon Bell (white lawyer and soon-to-be civil court judge), Dr. H. D. Bruce (white educator at East Texas Baptist College), Dr. M. L. Edwards (black physician at Jarvis Christian College for Negroes), Dr. W. R. Banks (black educator at Prairie View University), Tom Miller (white Austin politician), Dr. M. E. Sadler (white president of Texas Christian University), I. B. Loud (minister and district superintendent of the San Antonio district of the Methodist Church), and S. M. "Moss" Adams (white up and coming attorney). Prior to Hannah's appointment in 1951, the fourth black board member was Benjamin Morgan, a businessperson out of Corsicana, Texas. Bill McCoy, "Judge Bell-from Country Lawyer to Chief Justice," *South College Texas of Law, Annotations*, August 1983, 5, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting South Texas College of Law; "[Dr. H. D. Bruce, Educator and Library Supporter], Photograph," n.d., University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Marshall Public Library; "Wood County Man Is Appointed to Bi-Racial Body," *Wood County Record*, July 22, 1946, 1, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Mineola Memorial Library; "Journal of the Senate of the State of Texas, Regular Session of the Fifty-Second Legislature," 1951, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting UNT Libraries Government Documents

Department; Neal Douglass, "Mayor Tom Miller - Citizen of the Year Presentation, Photograph," January 10, 1950, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Austin History Center, Austin Public Library; "Church Additions In Eight Revivals Numbered 24," *Breckenridge American (Breckenridge, Texas)*, March 23, 1948, 1, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting Breckenridge Public Library; "Serve on State University's Board of Directors," *San Antonio Register*, May 30, 1947, 1, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, texashistory.unt.edu; crediting University of Texas at San Antonio.

¹⁹ Wesley, "Conspiracies?," 3.

²⁰ Ibid. Despite this belief that there existed a conspiracy against TSU and black Houstonians, Wesley did invite an investigation into the University, saying, "I have been hammering away at the excessive amounts of homosexuality among the faculty of TSU for months, and the record will show. It is true that I had hoped that the Board and the president might be able to dig into the matter quietly, but it seems to me that as long as an investigation is going on, everything about the school should be investigated. Incidentally, I have not thought that the president has been nearly or as vigorous in weeding out homosexuality as he could have or should have been. But I won't be a carping dog or a sinking camp-follower, to track the course of the Houston Chronicle, or whatever I think the whites may want, in the hope that I may benefit by following them." Those last words, of course, were a dig at C.W. Rice. Whether it was the "excessive amounts of homosexuality" or "homosexuality" in any measure that got under Wesley's skin remains a mystery. (That, of course, was a dig at Wesley.) Wesley, "Investigation of TSU," 3.

²¹ "As Investigation Nears End State Auditor Testifies: 'TSU Records in Good Shape,'" *Houston Informer*, August 8, 1953, sec. 1, 1, 10; "TSU Board Clears Dr. Lanier, School," *Houston Informer*, August 22, 1953, sec. 1, 1, 10. Lanier's opposition continued to lambast him in Houston's press after the investigation concluded. Wesley put them on notice: "Somebody should tell Messrs. C.W. Rice, Ralph Lee, and Ben Hawkins that the issue over TSU has been fought out and the decision has been taken, and that they lost. They are like some southerners whose grandparents forgot to come back and tell them that they lost the Civil War." Carter Wesley, "Over and Done With," *Houston Informer*, September 5, 1953, sec. 1, 3.

²² "Dr. Lanier Quits as TSU Prexy," *Houston Informer*, June 11, 1955, sec. 1, 1, 12; Carter Wesley, "TSU Fuses," *Houston Informer*, June 18, 1955, sec. 1, 3; Claude A. Barnett to Dr. R. O'Hara Lanier, June 22, 1955, The Claude A. Barnett Papers, 1918-1967, Series 2: Africa and Other Foreign Interests, 1925-1966, folder 252247-187-0006, ProQuest History Vault; White to Barnett, July 15, 1955; "Dr. Nabrit Succeeds Lanier as Texas Southern Head," *Jet*, July 28, 1955, 21.

²³ "Dr. Samuel M. Nabrit Named Texas Southern U. President," *San Antonio Register*, July 22, 1955, 1, 3, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting University of Texas at San Antonio; "New TSU Head's Ability to Satisfy Board Doubted," *San Antonio Register*, July 29, 1955, 1, Ibid.

²⁴ His father, Dr. James Madison Nabrit, originally from Atlanta, came from a family of working class people. James' father, Clarke Nabrit, had been born enslaved before beginning his emancipated life as a well-digger and eventually marrying Margaret Petty during Reconstruction. They brought James into the world on September 3, 1878, and Mrs. Nabrit committed herself to cultivating the "great promise in mental capability of her son." Like many young black people in the late nineteenth century, Nabrit's formal educational training did not afford him many career opportunities outside of teaching. While attending Morehouse College and in order to pay his tuition fees, he began teaching in rural schools between his academic terms, while also planting and picking cotton. In 1899, after completing his undergraduate degree, the young Nabrit married Augusta Gertrude West, the daughter of a formerly enslaved grocery store operator from Cuthbert, Georgia. Dr. Nabrit received formal theological training at Virginia Theological Seminary and Chicago Theological Seminary, before returning to Atlanta to work as a baker. In 1903, in order to teach at Central City College, the Nabrit family moved to Macon, and Dr. Nabrit became pastor of a Baptist church in nearby Forsythe. A few years later, the family moved to Americus, Georgia, and in 1907 Dr. Nabrit became pastor of Bethesda Baptist Church there.

They had their first son, James Madison Jr. in 1900 while still living in Atlanta and two daughters, Ann Elyse and Gertrude Lurlene, while living in Macon. They bore a second son, Samuel Milton, in 1905 in

Macon as well. The Nabrits had four more children following Samuel's birth: Henry Clarke, Lois Ellen, Cecilia, and Margaret. James Jr. eventually completed his undergraduate education at Morehouse and earned his law degree from Northwestern University in 1927. Moving to Houston in 1930, Nabrit opened a law practice with Carter Wesley and John Austin Atkins. Together, the three joined in the early efforts of the NAACP to force the Supreme Court to assess the constitutionality of racially restrictive covenants in residential deeds as well as the Texas Democratic Primary. In 1936, he accepted an offer to work at Howard University's law school in Washington, D.C., where he established the nation's first civil rights law course. His younger brother, Samuel, had grown an affinity for science, having been "taught Latin, Greek, and physics by his father at Walker Baptist Institute" after the family moved to Augusta in 1912. In 1921, the family moved back to Atlanta so the father could pastor Mount Olive Baptist Church. Following their eldest brother, the daughters of the family graduated from Spelman College, Talladega College, and Fisk University. The two youngest brothers graduated from Morehouse College like the senior and junior James.

James Madison Nabrit III built on his father's success and received his law degree from Yale University. Margaret Elizabeth Nabrit eventually married after graduating salutatorian from Spelman College. She studied for her Master of Arts degree in history and political science at the University of Michigan, after which she returned to Atlanta to teach. She eventually became Dean of Students there. J. Rueben Sheeler, "The Nabrit Family," *Negro History Bulletin*, February 14, 1958, box 1, folder 6, Dr. John Rueben Sheeler Collection MSS 268, HMRC, HPL; Mark V. Tushnet, *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 97; Chas. S. Johnson, "Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas" (Carnegie Corporation of New York, February 1, 1953), 11, Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services, Fondren Library, Rice University; John H. Stanfield II, *Historical Foundations of Black Reflective Sociology* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 206; Klarman, "White Primary Rulings: A Case Study in the Consequences of Supreme Court Decisionmaking."

²⁵ Sheeler, "The Nabrit Family," 6–8.

²⁶ Amilcar Shabazz, *Advancing Democracy: African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equity in Higher Education in Texas* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 201–2; S. M. Nabrit, "Desegregation and the Future of Graduate and Professional Education in Negro Institutions," *Journal of Negro Education* 27, no. 3 (1958): 415, doi:10.2307/2293776; "Race Is Unimportant, Board Member Says," *Progress-Index* (Petersburg, VA), June 19, 1966, 25.

²⁷ Thomas R. Cole, "Eldrewey Stearns: A Forgotten Man," *Galveston Daily News*, March 4, 1990, 6; Michael Berryhill, "Lost in the Cause," *Houston Press*, May 29, 1997, <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/lost-in-the-cause-6570813>; David Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow* (San Francisco: California Newsreel, 1998).

²⁸ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*.

²⁹ "Establishment of Baptist Student Union at T.S.U.," n.d., box 1, folder 18, Rev. William A. Lawson Papers, MS 532, Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University; Wilson, "Third Ward, Steeped in Tradition of Self-Reliance and Achievement"; William A. Lawson, interview by Daisha M. Bennet, n.d.; Rev. William "Bill" Lawson, interview by Veronica Perry, August 12, 1974, HMRC Oral History Collection, Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library; Tomiko Meeks, "We've Come This Far by Faith," *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 3 (2011): 30–32; "Bill" Lawson Guest Of Emancipation Event," *Houston Informer*, January 4, 1958, 2; Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*.

³⁰ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*; "Flog and Carve KKK on Negro," *Jet*, March 24, 1960.

³¹ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*.

³² Kellar, *Make Haste Slowly*, (e-book); Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, 76; Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*.

³³ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*; Richard Burns, "Taylor, Hobart T., Sr.," *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 15, 2010, <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fta30>.

- ³⁴ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*; Cole, *No Color Is My Kind*; Carolina Gonzales, "54 Years Ago: Freedom Riders Jailed after Sit-in at Houston's Union Station," *Houston Chronicle*, August 12, 2015, <http://www.chron.com/chron/tv/this-forgotten-day-in-houston/article/54-years-ago-Freedom-Riders-jailed-after-sit-in-6440082.php>; "Rice, TSU Students Fined in 'Stand-Ins,'" *Houston Press*, November 30, 1961, Civil Rights Movement and the Federal Government, Records of the Interstate Commerce Commission on Discrimination in Transportation, 1961-1970, Federal Government Records: Record Group 134, Records of the Interstate Commerce Commission, National Archives, College Park, Maryland; "[Affidavit of Loretta M. Thompson and Dorothy M. Henry, in Connection with Their Complaint of Prejudicial and Discriminatory Practices to Which They Were Subjected at the Union Station Coffee Shop in the Union Terminal Building at Houston, Texas on May 7, 1961]," May 11, 1961, Civil Rights Movement and the Federal Government, Records of the Interstate Commerce Commission on Discrimination in Transportation, 1961-1970, Federal Government Records: Record Group 134, Records of the Interstate Commerce Commission, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.
- ³⁵ Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*.
- ³⁶ Among other reasons, the business elite that had directed the city's politics and economic growth since the 1940s began passing away (e.g., Herman Brown died in 1962). Moreover, the city's population mushroomed in both numbers and geographic expanse. Houston's downtown became less and less the center of commercial life. Increasing racial and ethnic diversity also challenged what had been the prevailing electoral politics of the city, as councilpersons and mayoral candidates sought to gain the favor of wider audiences who showed no deference to white business elites. Pratt, "8F and Many More: Business and Civic Leadership in Modern Houston"; H.V. Savitch and John Clayton Thomas, *Big City Politics in Transition* (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1991), 175.
- ³⁷ At the same time, President Johnson's "War on Poverty" justified its massive financial outlays to police departments across the country as his administration argued that poverty, and its symptom crime, demanded greater investments in law enforcement modernization and professionalization—all of which were inspired by a desire to suppress urban rebellions rather than a thoroughgoing commitment to end poverty. Herman Short, interview by Louis J. Marchiafava, June 22, 1976, Houston Oral History Project, Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library; Mimi Swartz, "The Louie File," *Texas Monthly*, October 1985, 247; Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 100–123.
- ³⁸ Bullard, *Invisible Houston*, 123; Adair and Robinson, Black Women Oral History Project.
- ³⁹ Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part I); Black Power Freedom Army, "Dear Brothers and Sisters...," April 1967, folder Misc., Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University; "SCLC Handbook for Freedom Army Recruits" (Civil Rights Movement Veterans, 1964), http://www.crmvet.org/docs/64_sclc_freedomarmy.pdf.
- ⁴⁰ Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part I), 110–11.
- ⁴¹ Tommie D. Boudreaux and Alice M. Gatson, *African Americans of Galveston* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2013); Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part I), 110–11.
- ⁴² Berman, *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part I); "SNCC Members Bar Doors at TSU," *Houston Chronicle*, March 28, 1967.
- ⁴³ Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part I), 317; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967*, 28.

⁴⁴ As was true at TSU, campus unrest at Tennessee State University in Nashville, Jackson State College in Mississippi, and Howard University in Washington, D.C., and Southern University in Louisiana was rooted in student opposition to the over-policing of their spaces by armed cops and campus security, faculty members “characterized by a dead acquiescence... and a resignation to academic nothingness,” and the management of their academic and social lives as “Plantation regimes” run by conservative Boards of Regents and deans invested in “missionary mores” of yore. The students at Tennessee State complained about Lynch Street just as TSU students protested Wheeler Avenue—thoroughfares that brought speeding cars through their campuses and exposed them to drive-by violence by white terrorists. Campus and city police failed in both places to offer any protection to students, as the cities of Nashville and Houston refused to close off the roads to vehicle traffic. At both campuses and at Jackson State, students also protested early curfews for women students, food quality and hygiene in their cafeterias, and insufficient campus recreational facilities. Nathan Hare, “Behind the Student Black College Revolt,” *Ebony*, August 1967, 58–61; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967*, 61–79.

Black students in higher education had long recognized, critiqued, and rebelled against what they felt were impositions of white, bourgeois values on themselves by white philanthropists and black administrators. William H. Watkins, *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954*, 2nd edition (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001); Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*; Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007). In this way, the campus protests in the 1960s were similar to those that took place in the 1920s, when, although student activism coincided with the New Negro movements and black political responses to the social stakes of World War I, the interest of students did not often extend beyond their campuses. Raymond Wolters, *The New Negro on Campus: Black College Rebellions of the 1920s* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975).

Campus rebellions, while often precipitated by police brutality like the rebellions in Harlem in 1935 and 1943, Mobile, Alabama, in 1943, and Watts in 1965, were not commodity riots where locals converged on white-owned businesses and looted goods. At TSU and other campuses, vandalism was directly related to immediate protest needs: tossing food on the cafeteria floor, destroying street lamps to avoid police surveillance, and pelting police vehicles with projectiles were not akin to the kind of spontaneous economic reprisals that black urbanites engaged in elsewhere. On distinctions between kinds of riots in American racial history, see Morris Janowitz, *Social Control of Escalated Riots* (Chicago: University of Chicago, Center for Policy Study, 1968).

⁴⁵ Throughout the 1960s, frustrated young people from across the nation performed acts of civil disobedience across southern states to address the negative quality of life conditions for black people caused by intransigent segregationists and self-congratulating liberals. The Freedom Riders faced violent resistance by police departments and assassination attempts by civilians as they traversed the South on integrated buses. With the Southern Leadership Christian Conference (SCLC) and the NAACP they protested, marched, and boycotted, building a network of related student organizations on college campuses across the country. In Houston, as elsewhere, they rallied behind Muhammad Ali as he defied the draft and refused to fight in Vietnam. And, in 1966, with Kwame Ture (formerly Stokely Carmichael) at the head of the Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee, as well as the founding of the Black Panther Party in Oakland, California and the arrival of Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick to Houston and his Deacons for Defense and Justice—an armed self-defense group Kirkpatrick had helped found in Louisiana—black Americans appeared ready to continue their fight for civil rights through the end of the decade. Clayborne Carson, *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981); Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, 156; Lance Hill, *Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Raymond Arsenault, *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006); Thomas L. Bynum, *NAACP Youth and the Fight for Black Freedom, 1936-1965* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013).

⁴⁶ Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, 33, 80, 90; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3) (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967), 822; David Brand, “Undercover Cops,” *Wall Street Journal*,

September 10, 1968, I. Moynihan, in 1965, recognized the suffocating effects of poverty on the life chances of black Americans. Instead of ameliorating the problems of unemployment and educational underperformance, Americans focused on his notion that black communities existed in a “tangle of pathology” and eventually resigned, as presidential power transferred from liberals to conservatives, that the best way to address the problem of urban crime was to increasingly incarcerate young black men. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, “The Negro Family: The Case For National Action,” U.S. Department of Labor - History -- The Negro Family - The Case for National Action, March 1965, <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm>; Bruce Western and Christopher Wildeman, “The Black Family and Mass Incarceration,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 621 (January 1, 2009): 221–42.

- ⁴⁷ Donald Jackson, “The Genocide of Black Students,” *Aframerican*, April 1967, 10–12, folder TSU (5) Five Defense Fund, TSU Riot Collection, Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University; Blake Slonecker, *A New Dawn for the New Left: Liberation News Service, Montague Farm, and the Long Sixties* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012), 19; Black Power Freedom Army, “Dear Brothers and Sisters...” Some archives have produced digital copies of some issues of the *Aframerican* (SNCC’s short-lived newsletter out of Atlanta) such as: “FBI Files on SNCC,” *Internet Archive*, n.d., <https://archive.org/details/StudentNonviolentCoordinatingCommittee/SouthernFreedomMovementDocuments1951-1968> (Civil Rights Movement Veterans, 1964), <http://www.crmvet.org/docs/orgsdocs.htm>. To see the full run (October 1966 through February 1968), researchers will still need to procure the SNCC Papers, preserved on microfilm, viewing Series VIII: Research Department, 1959-1969, Reel 17.
- ⁴⁸ “The Invasion of Houston (SNCC) Office,” n.d., folder Misc., Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University.
- ⁴⁹ “The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C.,” September 24, 1967, folder TSU (5) Five Defense Fund, TSU Riot Collection, Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University; Watson, *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990*, 80; Zohreh Emami and Paulette I. Olson, *Engendering Economics: Conversations with Women Economists in the United States* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 173; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967* (e-book).
- ⁵⁰ Irene Salinas, “UH COBRs Arrested, Freed in Dump Protest,” *Daily Cougar*, May 18, 1967, 1, University of Houston Special Collections; F. D. Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” *Militant*, June 26, 1967, 8; “The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C.”; “News Release: Support the T.S.U. Five,” n.d., folder T.S.U. Five & Their Indictment For Murder and Two Assaults to “MURDER,” Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University. On the historical tradition of black people wielding guns in defense of their civil liberties and lives see Nicholas Johnson, *Negroes and the Gun: The Black Tradition of Arms* (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2014); Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie*.
- ⁵¹ “The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C.”; Watson, *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990*, 80; Emami and Olson, *Engendering Economics*, 173; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967* (e-book).
- ⁵² “Friends of SNCC Picket in Houston,” *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*, March 29, 1967, sec. A, 2; Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8; “The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C.”; “Attention Students, Faculty and Other Citizens of Texas,” n.d., folder Misc., Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University; “News Release: Support the T.S.U. Five.”
- ⁵³ Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8; “The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C.”; “Attention Students, Faculty and Other Citizens of Texas.”
- ⁵⁴ “Black Power Revolt at Texas Southern,” *The Movement [SNCC]*, May 1967, 1, Farmworker Movement Documentation Project Digital Archives, The Library, University of California San Diego.
- ⁵⁵ “Friends of SNCC Picket in Houston,” 2; “In Memoriam: Henry A. Bullock,” 1973, <http://www.utexas.edu/faculty/council/2000-2001/memorials/SCANNED/bullock.pdf>; Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8. Frederick Douglass Kirkpatrick was a six-foot-two-inch former defensive lineman and alumnus of Grambling College and originally from Louisiana. He was also an ordained minister in the Church of God in Christ and had been director of folk culture in the SCLC in

the early 1960s. After parting ways with the SCLC, Kirkpatrick arrived in Houston in 1966, and established the Friends of SNCC with TSU students Millard Lowe and Lee Otis Johnson. Lowe had attended TSU in the early 1960s as an undergraduate before leaving prior to the completion of his senior year after being inspired to join SNCC workers in Alabama. He returned to Houston by way of Milwaukee, where he had been jailed in 1965 for “participating in demonstrations.” He had also spent some time in Arkansas organizing a SNCC chapter there. He was originally from El Campo, Texas. Johnson was also a TSU student who had begun making a name for himself in Houston and at the University of Texas in Austin as a piquant orator. “Rev. F.D. Kirkpatrick; Associate of Dr. King,” *The New York Times*, August 27, 1986, sec. Obituaries; Samuel G. Freedman, “South Carolina State Stand Unmatched by Any Made on a Field,” *The New York Times*, February 7, 2013; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles: Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1)*, 147–50; *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3)*, 852; Jennifer Jensen Wallach and John A. Kirk, eds., *Arsnick: The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Arkansas* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2012), 142; “‘Snick’ Group Loses Texas Campus Haven,” *Amarillo Globe-Times*, March 22, 1967, 5; Dick J. Reavis, “Why I Turned In Lee Otis Johnson,” *Texas Monthly*, July 1980, 107–10, 158; Kenneth S. Tollett, “Southern Justice for Blacks,” *Ebony*, October 1971, 58–64. It’s also possible that TSU student Caroline Banks was also an organizer of Houston’s Friends of SNCC, but the Subcommittee only mentions her once and other sources I’ve consulted fail to mention her name or her contributions.

⁵⁶ Trazawell Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” June 23, 1967, 2–3, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Lee, interview; *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3)*, 876.

⁵⁷ Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8. Franklin Alexander, along with his activist wife Kendra Claire Harris, had come to Houston as the national chair of the W. E. B. Du Bois Club, a socialist youth organization founded in 1964. Alexander had been inspired by Charlene Mitchell, his sister, to explore the intersecting oppressive mechanisms of racism and capitalism, and thus by the early 1960s was primed for national leadership. As chair of the Club, he traveled the country, helping local students establish chapters, supporting groups like SNCC, and speaking at universities in places like Indiana, California, and Texas. Beth Slutsky, *Gendering Radicalism: Women and Communism in Twentieth-Century California* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015), e-book; “TSU: The Potential for Explosion,” *Rice Thresher*, April 13, 1967, 2, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Rice University: Woodson Research Center, Houston, Texas; Jon D. McKesson, “Proposed Bob Kennedy For President In 1968,” *Indianapolis Star*, August 6, 1966, 7; Fulton Lewis Jr., “‘Liberation’ of Watts Plan of Dubois Club,” *Standard-Speaker [Hazleton, Pennsylvania]*, June 28, 1966, 12; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967*, lxix; *Communist Activities in the Central California Area: Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities House of Representatives Ninetieth Congress, First Session* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964).

⁵⁸ Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8; “Black Power Revolt at Texas Southern,” 10; Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” 1–3.

⁵⁹ J. A. Pierce to All Students of Texas Southern University, “Organization of A Student Advisory Committee to the President,” April 10, 1967, folder Misc., Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University; Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8; “Black Power Revolt at Texas Southern,” 10; Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” 1–3; Phil Maclin, “Indictments in TSU Probe Likely Today,” *Houston Post*, June 2, 1967, 1, 7.

⁶⁰ Kirkpatrick, “The Police Attack at Texas Southern,” 8.

⁶¹ Ibid.; Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” 1; “Black Power Revolt at Texas Southern,” 10; Floyd Nichols, “[Statement of Floyd Nichols],” June 23, 1967, 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; “[Statement of Charles Freeman],” June 23, 1967, 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department

Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353. Biographical details about Freeman can be found at: "Charles Edward Freeman III," *Rice University Between Decisions: From Co-Education to Integration (1957-1970) Digital Exhibit*, accessed August 20, 2016, <http://exhibits.library.rice.edu/exhibits/show/between-decisions/race/charlie-freeman>; "[Statement of Charles Freeman]." Freeman eventually re-matriculated to Rice but flunked out, then later earned "a B.A. from Lamar University and went on to earn an MBA and a law degree." B. J. Almond, "Reflections of the Past, Promises for the Future," *Rice University News & Media*, February 22, 2016, <http://news.rice.edu/2016/02/22/reflections-of-the-past-promises-for-the-future/>.

- ⁶² Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 2-3; Lee, interview; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3), 876.
- ⁶³ Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 4; Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, 157; "The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C."; Nichols, "[Statement of Floyd Nichols]," 1. One student related the events of a fight she had with a white girl: "She had a belt and I told her don't you hit me.... Somebody pushes me up to the white girl and she hit me and I hit her back and we started fighting. So this girl named Mosley, she jumped on the bag(?) and she took over and I took off." Later Mosley claimed that she was jumped by "10 colored girls" and the black student who testified about the fight was suspended for three days. In another incident, fifteen black students were disciplined for fighting, but none of the white students involved received any reprimand. Desegregation was less than total at the school, where, for example, for gym, white and black students showered on different sides of the locker room—though some white students who "don't hate the niggers" would shower with black students. "[Tape I, Side II]," n.d., Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.
- ⁶⁴ Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 4.
- ⁶⁵ Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, 157; "The Truth About Texas Southern University & S.N.C.C."; "News Release: Support the T.S.U. Five"; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 5.
- ⁶⁶ "Statement of O. C. Brown," n.d., 1-2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 5. Prior to his arrival in Houston, Booker T. Bonner had "become an important figure in direct action as he led a civil rights march in Austin in 1963, joined the struggle for a municipal city rights ordinance in Austin, and became a field representative for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in Texas." Martin Kuhlman, "Direct Action at the University of Texas During the Civil Rights Movement, 1960-1965," in *The African American Experience in Texas: An Anthology*, ed. Bruce A. Glasrud and James Smallwood (Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007), 333n20.
- ⁶⁷ McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967*, lxix; Douglas Wayne Waller, "[Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller]," June 22, 1967, 1-2, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Nichols, "[Statement of Floyd Nichols]," 2.
- ⁶⁸ Waller, "[Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller]," 1-2; Nichols, "[Statement of Floyd Nichols]," 1.
- ⁶⁹ Nichols, "[Statement of Floyd Nichols]," 2. Black people in the Americas have a long tradition of using guns for self-defense. Historian Nicholas Johnson traces this history from the nineteenth century, when fugitives from slavery used guns to protect themselves from slavecatchers, to the present. He argues that the "black tradition of arms" never faded in American history—that prevailing narratives about black people's commitment to non-violence has unjustifiably misrepresented the prevalence of armed self-defense, especially among rural black southerners. Indeed, gun culture historian Angela Frye Keaton notes that guns were ubiquitous among black rural Americans, who used firearms most often for hunting and keeping out pests. However, Keaton places Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s political non-violence in false opposition to North Carolina NAACP leader Robert F. Williams' notion of self-defense. Johnson's work corrects this common error, noting that neither King nor other advocates of non-violence like Fannie Lou Hamer argued against self-defense or saw it as antithetical to their non-violent political strategy. Rather, all these leaders, Williams included, opposed what Johnson distinguishes as political violence. That

is, they did not advocate using violence to secure their civil rights, but they all respected the right to bear arms in defense against white political violence. Williams, for example, once argued, “[I]f it’s necessary to stop lynching with lynching, then we must be willing to resort to that method.” The state had proven woefully inadequate in protecting black lives; black people adjusted to that tradition of state failure with their own means of protection. Johnson joins historian Timothy B. Tyson in challenging the notion that black people went from post-War militancy to “accommodationism” that has often been used to characterize the politics of the NAACP and the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s. They argue that there was no such shift; that black people practiced complicated politics throughout their history in the United States, and that their commitment to full inclusion in civil democracy through non-violent means was never in tension with their pragmatic politics of armed self-defense. The Black Panther Party continued this tradition in dramatic displays of their right to bear arms. In one incident, recounted by Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin Jr., Huey Newton, Bobby Seale, and Bobby Hutton faced off with a white officer in Oakland in 1954. Angry that the three armed men were policing the police by monitoring a cop who was surveilling the area, the police officer tried to illegally confiscate their guns during an illegal stop. Newton prevented the officer from taking Seale’s shotgun, knocking the unwelcomed officer out of the civilian car, and, with a shotgun pointed at him in front of a large crowd of onlookers, saying, “Now, who in the hell do you think you are, you big rednecked bastard, you rotten fascist swine, you bigoted racist? You come into my car, trying to brutalize me and take my property away from me. Go for your gun and you’re a dead pig.” A standoff between the newly formed Black Panthers and the police on the street ended with Newton demonstrating to black Oaklanders how to assert their rights in the face of police violence by the display of firearms as a tool of self-defense. Johnson, *Negroes and the Gun*; Timothy B. Tyson, *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), 149; Angela Frye Keaton, “Unholstered and Unquestioned: The Rise of Post-World War II American Gun Cultures” (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2006); Joshua Bloom and Waldo E. Martin Jr., *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016).

⁷⁰ Waller, “[Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller],” 1–2; Nichols, “[Statement of Floyd Nichols],” 2; Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” “[Statement of Charles Freeman],” 2; “[Handwritten Statement, Possibly of David Minor],” n.d., Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

⁷¹ Salinas, “UH COBRRs Arrested, Freed in Dump Protest,” 1; “Dump Pickets Are Held,” *The Eagle* [Bryan, Texas], May 21, 1967, 1, 8.

⁷² Salinas, “UH COBRRs Arrested, Freed in Dump Protest,” 1; Gene Locke, interview by David Goldstein, July 31, 2008, Houston Oral History Project, Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library; McLaughlin, *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967*; Robert D. Bullard, “The Mountains of Houston: Environmental Justice and the Politics of Garbage,” *Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston* 93 (2014): 30. COBRR was founded at UH “for the purpose of bettering race relations in Academic, Social, and Political areas on this, the University of Houston campus.” “University of Houston Committee on Better Race Relations Constitution,” n.d., folder T.S.U. Five & Their Indictment For Murder and Two Assaults to “MURDER,” Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University.

⁷³ Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” 6; Nichols, “[Statement of Floyd Nichols],” 3.

⁷⁴ “Statement of O. C. Brown,” 2; Wendell Thompson and Cleve McDowell, July 8, 1967, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Virgie Eaton and Cleve McDowell, July 8, 1967, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

⁷⁵ Chester Logan, interview by John Biggers, July 27, 1967, 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Waller, “[Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller],” 3–4; “Statement of Clarence Harper,” n.d., 1, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; Franklin, “[Statement of Trazawell Franklin],” 6; “Statement of John Booker,” n.d., 3, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; “[Statement of Charles Freeman],” 2; “[Handwritten Statement, Possibly of David Minor],” Maurice Hopson and Cleve

McDowell, July 6, 1967, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

⁷⁶ Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8; Jones, "Arm Yourself or Harm Yourself: People's Party II and the Black Panther Party in Houston, Texas," 11; *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3)*, 824; *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1)*, 146-47, 163. Lieutenant Singleton of the Houston Police Department testified before the Senate subcommittee that he had never stepped foot inside a TSU dorm and did not supervise the evacuation inside the buildings, but was convinced his officers had not destroyed student property. He said, "I am sure, without any doubt, that the students and some of the other people inside the dormitories did considerable amount of damage prior to any police officer ever entering the building. From the noise going on and the objects being thrown against the walls, and things of that nature, there was no doubt but what that type of noise could only be made by some type of student destruction." *Ibid.*, 199.

⁷⁷ Based on the evidence that follows, I argue that there was no student-led riot on campus that precipitated the police attack. I do believe, however, that at least one student shot at least one bullet toward Blaylock's police vehicle. However, the only witnesses of students firing any weapons were those who saw one or two male undergraduates shooting out the street lamps in order to provide themselves cover from trigger-happy police officers. The fact that *Chronicle*, *Post*, news outlets across the country, and the U.S. Congress accepted the notion that these black students had waged war on police officers fit into a longstanding, prevailing stereotype about black people and guns. While folklore, gun sale advertisements, and popular media depicted white gun owners as white male hunters, farmers, and explorers, black gun owner were habitually "cast... as the aggressors" against law and order in press accounts and other forms of fiction. (To quote Linnethia "Nene" Leakes: "I said what I said.") Indeed, following the rebellion in Watts, white writers decried the "easy availability of guns," producing "thunderous... public outcry" at the idea that black people would not only have access to guns but might even be able to own them legally. When Robert F. Williams in North Carolina implored that black people take up arms for self-defense in the 1950s and 1960s, rumors quickly spread that Russian Communists were providing guns to black Americans. In 1964, New York City police officers "raided the homes of two officers of a Harlem rifle club and seized 12,000 rounds of ammunition"—a raid driven "by fears that a black rifle club was preparing for an attack" on white Americans. Likewise, the morning after the Camp Logan Mutiny in Houston in 1917, police officers raided black civilian homes and confiscated their firearms. Likewise, prior to the East St. Louis riot of the same year, newspapers published stories suggested that "bad niggers" who had migrated from elsewhere were dangerous gun-toters. After the riot, the white press spread unfounded stories about armed black people attacking white people and their homes in order to justify the pogrom that white Missourians committed. Stories of black people attacking civil servants with firearms and threatening white civilian lives with violence have prevailed in the United States for centuries and have been used to justify police violence, state neglect, racial segregation, and white terrorism. The Haitian Revolution, which began in the late 1780s and continued in earnest through the early years of the 1800s and the armed assault on Harper's Ferry in 1859 frightened white Americans, who saw black people with guns as a threat to their social security—and indeed, armed black people were a threat to white supremacy. However, rather than equate black people's violent resistance to slavery as revolution in the same vein as the American war against Great Britain (i.e., liberating), white Americans saw them as apocalyptic. Sociologist Howard Odum depicts white southerners' unfounded fears of black people in the 1940s as evidence of a social pathology. This was certainly also true of white northerners. Fear of "race riots" seemed to consume many white southern urbanites, who despite having never witnessed a "race riot" where white people were not the perpetrators, worried when they heard and spread rumors of black people buying large quantities of guns and ammunition. One rumor circulated in Mississippi of a black man of buying coffins full of guns in anticipation of retaliation against white Americans. Keaton, "Unholstered and Unquestioned," 151-53; C. L. R. James and James Walvin, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, 2nd ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1963); Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004); Tyson, *Radio Free*

Dixie; Robert F. Williams, *Negroes with Guns* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998); Elliott M. Rudwick, *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964); Ira Berlin, *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War* (New York: New Press, 1992); also see Stephen V. Ash, *A Massacre in Memphis: The Race Riot That Shook the Nation One Year after the Civil War*, 2013; Harper Barnes, *Never Been a Time: The 1917 Race Riot That Sparked the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Walker & Co., 2008); Jan Voogd, *Race Riots & Resistance: The Red Summer of 1919* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008).

That fear of armed black people has not gone away. As recently as 2005, the mainstream press reported, without verification, that the mostly black victims of the social disaster known as Hurricane Katrina were rampaging in New Orleans. Mayor Ray Nagin fed into this media hysteria, saying, "They have quite a few people running around here with guns. You got these young teenage boys running up around here raping these girls." These unnamed boys and unnamed girls stood in for all black people, as the media disseminated an image of New Orleans overrun by black "armed miscreants roaming seemingly at will." After an AP article reported that black people were trying to shoot down relief helicopters, which halted evacuation efforts, "at least 150 news outlets, from India to Turkey to Spain" carried the story of "dysfunctional urbanites too depraved to be saved." These stories sounded absurd because they were; it turned out that there had been no shooting at helicopters and there were no gang rapes in the Superdome. There was, however, overwhelming police violence. Black families, already suffering from the environmental racism that produced the Katrina disaster, would also have to find ways to bury the bodies of their friends and relatives who were shot down by the New Orleans Police Department at the Danziger Bridge. For an example of one debunked press story, see "Relief Workers Confront 'Urban Warfare,'" September 1, 2005, <http://www.cnn.com/2005/WEATHER/09/01/katrina.impact/>. Reason.com shot down these false stories months later: Matt Welch, "They Shoot Helicopters, Don't They?," Reason.com, December 1, 2005, <http://reason.com/archives/2005/12/01/they-shoot-helicopters-dont-th>. On the Danziger Bridge and police murders in the aftermath of the hurricane, see Ronnie Greene, *Shots on the Bridge: Police Violence and Cover-up in the Wake of Katrina* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2016). Finally, for rich racial, class, and gender analyses of Hurricane Katrina as a social disaster, rather than a natural disaster, see: Emmanuel David and Elaine Pitt Enarson, eds., *The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012); Michael Eric Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2006).

About a quarter million Katrina evacuees made their way to Houston and about 100,000 made the city their permanent home. Following the arrival of New Orleanians to the city, the press in Houston began publishing stories of an wave of criminal terror sweeping across Harris County. Indeed, racist, classist, and anti-immigrant attitudes in the city of Houston configured most of these black evacuees as a scourge to be deported, many offering to buy busses to ship the New Orleanians back to the Crescent City. These fears turned out to be based on false perceptions of an uptick in crime—a perception encouraged by the pronouncements of the local press and the police department. Research has shown, instead, that Houston did not see a crime wave in the aftermath of migration from New Orleans, and moreover, that the crime rate actually fell in Houston as its population ballooned with these new arrivals. Ryan Landry and Elizabeth Rankin, "Violent Crime Rates in Houston Before and After Hurricane Katrina," *Southwestern Economic Review: Research Notes*, 2008, 1–2; Tom Dart, "'New Orleans West': Houston Is Home for Many Evacuees 10 Years after Katrina," *The Guardian*, August 25, 2015, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2015/aug/25/new-orleans-west-houston-hurricane-katrina>; Sean P. Varano et al., "A Tale of Three Cities: Crime and Displacement after Hurricane Katrina," *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38, no. 1 (January 2010): 42–50, doi:10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2009.11.006; Jason E. Shelton and M. Nicole Coleman, "After the Storm: How Race, Class, and Immigration Concerns Influenced Beliefs About the Katrina Evacuees," *Social Science Quarterly* 90, no. 3 (2009): 480–96; James Pinkerton, "Study: Katrina Crime Wave Nonexistent in Houston," *Houston Chronicle*, February 15, 2010, <http://www.chron.com/news/houston-texas/article/Study-Katrina-crime-wave-nonexistent-in-Houston-1715592.php>; Mimi Swartz, "The Year of Living Dangerously: Houston's Katrina Hangover," *Texas Monthly*, October 2006, <http://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/the-year-of-living-dangerously/>; Ryan Holeywell, "No, Katrina Evacuees Didn't Cause a Houston Crime Wave," *Houston Chronicle*, August 26, 2015, <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/No-Katrina-evacuees-didn-t-cause-a-Houston-crime-6464524.php>.

- ⁷⁸ "Statement of Chester Logan," n.d., 1, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "[Statement of Charles Freeman]," 3; Douglas Wayne Waller, "[2nd Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller]," June 22, 1967, 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Leon Hardy to Thomas R. Ashley, November 19, 1967, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 15, Group V, Box 2354.
- ⁷⁹ "Statement of William D. Butler," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 7; Rayford Whittingham Logan, *The Negro in American Life and Thought: The Nadir, 1877-1901*. (New York: Dial Press, 1954), 1; "[Statement of Willie Robinson]," n.d., Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Waller, "[2nd Statement of Douglas Wayne Waller]," 2.
- ⁸⁰ "Statement of Chester Logan"; "Statement of Howard Williams," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Statement of V.J. Hollins," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.
- ⁸¹ "Statement of Chester Logan," 1; "Statement of Thomas Turner," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Statement of Howard Williams," 1-2; "Statement of V.J. Hollins," 2; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 7; "What Inspired It: (Larry Jackson--National Merit Scholar) Person on the Scene," n.d., Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; "[Statement of Willie Robinson]."
- ⁸² Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 7; "Statement of Richard Hurndon," n.d., 2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.
- ⁸³ "Statement of William Glaze," n.d., 1-2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.
- ⁸⁴ "Statement of Thomas Turner"; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 7; "Statement of James Young," n.d., 1, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.
- ⁸⁵ "Statement of Robert Allison Leroy Lewis Jr.," n.d., 1, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Statement of Clarence Harper," 1; "Statement of James Young," 1.
- ⁸⁶ "Statement of Carlyn Robbin," n.d., 1-2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.
- ⁸⁷ Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3), 875-76; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1), 61, 228; Bill Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," n.d., Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353; Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8. Earl Allen was a local minister who was hired as the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity in Houston since November 1966.
- ⁸⁸ "Statement of Thomas Turner"; Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8.
- ⁸⁹ Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3), 875-76; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1), 61, 228; Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]"; Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8.

⁹⁰ Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," 2.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² "Statement of Howard Williams," 5; "Statement of W.T. Adams," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; Franklin, "[Statement of Trazawell Franklin]," 8; *Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1)*, 164, 369; Kirkpatrick, "The Police Attack at Texas Southern," 8; James L. Turner, "Medical Examiner's Investigation Case No. 67-1219," May 17, 1967, Inquest Records, Harris County Archives; Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," 2. Lawson quoted Short as saying, "Go in and clean this mess up," perhaps a paraphrase because repeating Short's words would have been blasphemous. The quote in this paragraph comes from a University of Houston student who was visiting TSU that night. The student, from Port Arthur, said, "I feel that Houston has the most stupid police chief and police force," confirmed by the effective firing squad he ordered to assault the dorms after students merely "lit a fire in front of the dormitory." "[Statement XIV]," n.d., Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960-1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

⁹³ Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," 2-3.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 4.

⁹⁵ "Statement of V. J. Hollins," 4.

⁹⁶ "Statement of Alvin Johnson," n.d., 1, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.

⁹⁷ "Statement of Robert Allison Leroy Lewis Jr.," 2; "Statement of Clarence Harper," 4; "Statement of Howard Williams," 5; "Statement of David Harrington," n.d., 1-3, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections. Philip Wayne Cartwright's statement confirms the details in Harrington's. "Statement of Philip Wayne Cartwright," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.

⁹⁸ "Statement of Gerald Barnes," n.d., 1-2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections. Continental Bowling Lanes eventually became the Continental Showcase, a nighttime entertainment venue. In the 1970s, a new owner from Fifth Ward transformed it into JB's. I found the address and these related details here: "Roberta Flack and Her Entire Cast [Advertisement]," *Rice Thresher*, October 28, 1971, 6, University of North Texas Libraries, The Portal to Texas History, <http://texashistory.unt.edu>; crediting Rice University: Woodson Research Center, Houston, Texas; "New Houston Nitery Bows," *Billboard*, January 14, 1978, 42.

⁹⁹ "Statement of Gerald Barnes," 1-2. Although readers might speculate that the students' nonchalant attitudes about gunfire suggest some particular about Third Ward where the campus was situated—particularly that it was crime- and gun-ridden, contemporaries attest to the fact that gun noise was common in neighborhoods throughout Houston during the middle of the twentieth century. Gunfire did not necessarily mean a crime was taking place, as men in the city were socialized to make noise in public spaces, a feat many accomplished by firing guns into the air on any given day.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.; "Statement of Shelton Dotson," n.d., 6, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Summary: The Students Statement of Personal Injury or Intimidation," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.

¹⁰² "Statement of Gerald Barnes," 3; "Statement of Thomas Barbee," n.d., 2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections.

¹⁰³ "Statement of Hayward McKursson," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Statement of Charles Criner," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special

Collections.

¹⁰⁴ “Statement of Robert Allison Leroy Lewis Jr.,” 2–4.

¹⁰⁵ “Statement of Clarence Harper,” 2–3; “Statement of James Young,” 2; “Statement of Gerald Barnes,” 4; “Statement of John Booker,” 2; “Statement of Howard Williams,” 5–7; “Statement of V. J. Hollins,” 3–4.

¹⁰⁶ “Statement of Robert Allison Leroy Lewis Jr.,” 2–4; “Statement of Clarence Hall,” n.d., 4, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; Glenn McNair, “Slave Women, Capital Crime, and Criminal Justice in Georgia,” *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 2 (July 1, 2009): 135–58; Chris Gray and Brett Koshkin, “The TSU Toronados,” *Houston Press*, December 12, 2007, <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/the-tsu-toronados-6540593>. Lewis was released from jail at 6:35pm on May 17th. Young was released around 3:30 or 4:30pm.

¹⁰⁷ “Statement of Madison Tyler,” n.d., 1–2, box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; “Statement of Alvin Johnson,” 2. Tyler did not remember seeing any dogs in the Junior-Senior dorm, and instead said, “I think they had all the dogs in Lanier Hall.” Booker said “all the real brutality came... between getting out of the dorm to the ground.”

¹⁰⁸ “Statement of Madison Tyler,” 3–4. Tyler was not released until 10:00 that night.

¹⁰⁹ “Statement of Shelton Dotson,” 1–3.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹¹¹ By “dehumanization” I mean to invoke the notion that the “human” is a social and legal construction that appends certain so-called inalienable right to individual subjects. Thus, I do not mean that they were symbolically made to feel less than human or that there is something inherently useful or noble in thinking about humanity as a biological category. Instead I am arguing that they were materially displaced from the socially constructed category “human” and its legal protections.

¹¹² Lawson, “[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson],” 3.

¹¹³ “Statement of James Burroughs,” n.d., 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁵ “[Statement VII],” n.d., 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 1–2; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3), 856.

¹¹⁷ “[Statement beginning ‘Several Girls...’],” n.d., 1–3, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353. I present the theoretical argument about black-male bodies as sites for public violence and containment by law enforcement officials elsewhere. See David Ponton, “Clothed in Blue Flesh: Police Brutality and the Disciplining of Race, Gender, and the ‘Human,’” *Theory & Event* 19, no. 3 (2016), <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/623994>.

¹¹⁸ “Statement of Mrs. Mattie Harbor,” n.d., 1, Papers of the NAACP, Series A, Supplement to Part 23: Legal Department Case Files, 1960–1972, Reel 14, Group V, Box 2353.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1–2.

¹²⁰ “Statement of Mrs. Mattie Harbor”; Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1), 168.

¹²¹ Saul Friedman, “Life in Black Houston,” *Texas Observer*, June 9, 1967. Elizabeth Hinton masterfully demonstrates this last point about the War on Crime as a project that specifically targeted young black men in urban spaces. Houston was one of the major cities in which anti-crime projects that increased

black male incarceration was implemented. The War on Crime was a remarkable failure; throughout its implementation over several decades crime rates in major cities rose rather than fell. Hinton, *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*.

¹²² Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," 5.

¹²³ "Police Probe Into Rice Blast Gets Nowhere," *Houston Post*, January 22, 1950, sec. 1, 1; "'Prankster' Trio Cleared in Bombing," *Houston Post*, January 25, 1950, sec. 1, 14; "[Statement VII]," 2; "Facts Concerning the Crisis at T.S.U.," n.d., folder T.S.U. Five & Their Indictment For Murder and Two Assaults to "MURDER," Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University. White Americans, rather than seeing black people as individuals, saw them as statistics—specifically, crime statistics. This was no less true in the later part of the twentieth century, as Elizabeth Hinton demonstrates in *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime*, than it was in its earliest decades, as documented by Khalil Gibran Muhammad in *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*.

¹²⁴ "Statement of Anthony Fisher," n.d., box 30, folder 127-30-1, George & Latane Lambert Papers, University of Texas Arlington Libraries Special Collections; "Houston Police Cover Department With Shame," *San Antonio News*, May 19, 1967 reprinted in the hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations; Julie Anne Robinson, "Icarus," *Scandal* (New York, NY: American Broadcasting Company, November 7, 2013), 2; Lawson, "[Statement of Reverend Bill Lawson]," 3.

¹²⁵ Richard Ingersoll, "Houston's Academic Enclaves," in *Ephemeral City: Cite Looks at Houston*, ed. Barrie Scardino, William F. Stern, and Bruce C. Webb (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 179; Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*.

CONCLUSION

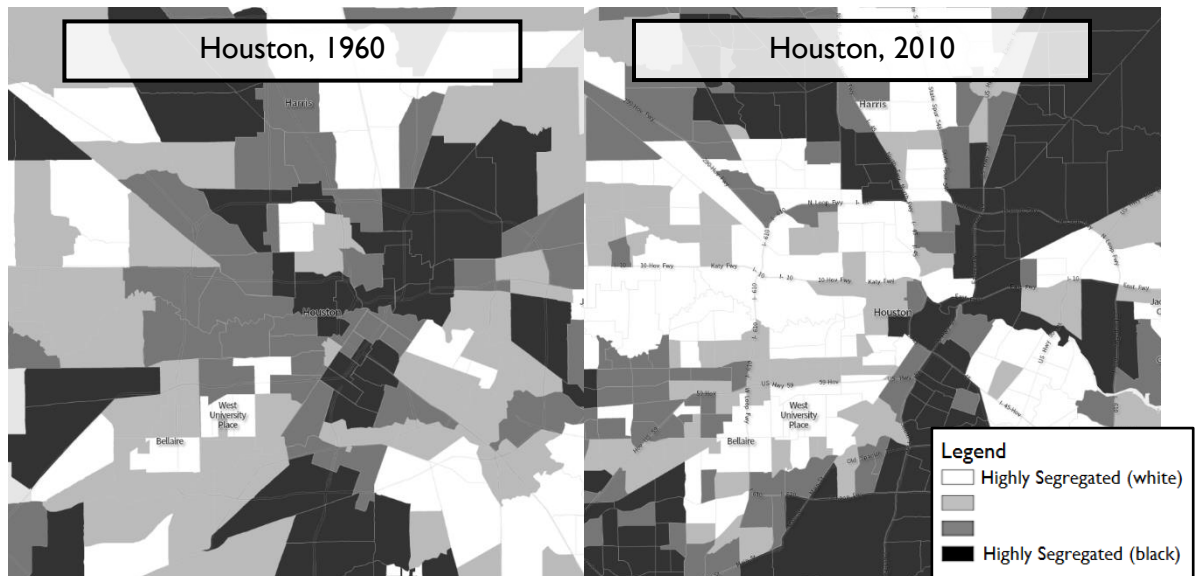
Residential segregation continued to generate indignities and brutality in non-white Houston communities throughout the duration of the twentieth century. Only a few months after the police attack on Texas Southern University students, State Representative Curtis Graves toured Acres Homes to learn about a water shortage in the community. There, he found that the city had sent water trucks to address the problem. He watched as a fireperson poured the water into “buckets, jugs, and just about anything that would carry” it. The color of the water disgusted him. He asked a truck driver what officials expected the residents to do with it. The driver replied, “Mostly wash clothes or the dishes, but it isn’t safe to drink unless they boil it.” Graves replied, “You can bet that it is not safe! Look at the color of that water.” One resident scoffed at the city’s solution to the crisis, noting that “he did not need water to wash clothes, but for drinking and bathing purposes.” Mayor Louis Welch’s office claimed to “know nothing of the dirty water that was being given to the people in Acres Homes” when they learned that Graves was inspecting the neighborhood. As a community still outside the city limits due to underbounding practices, Acres Homes residents remained without an ally. Their own county commissioner, Squatty Lyons, dismissed the crisis, saying “that there is nothing that he can do.” Earlier fears about the neighborhood’s inability to acquire adequate services from the county had been appropriately placed. The assistance from the city of Houston could be construed as magnanimous, if, of course, the people of Acres Homes were somehow immune to the effects of contaminated drinking water.¹

Meanwhile, within the city limits, black and brown communities continued to bear the weight of concentrated poverty. Although Houstonians of Mexican and Mexican American descent had been present throughout the city's history, they became increasingly active after the 1930s, and especially so in the 1960s and beyond. Organizations like the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) "initiated and led the campaign for Mexican American civil rights," historian Guadalupe San Miguel explains, with the intention of having Mexican Americans classified "as part of the Caucasian or white race in order to achieve social equality." Like black Americans, many Mexicans and Mexican Americans were victims of white terror in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, suffering lynching, xenophobic violence, and deportation. Ultimately, however, middle class Mexican Americans believed assimilation into the white race remained possible. Felix Tijerina, president of LULAC between 1956 and 1960, once remarked that Mexican Americans did not share the problems of "the Negro" and that he had no interest in being an "ally" in black struggles. However, many Mexican and Mexican Americans living in Houston suffered neighborhoods "littered with trash and junk" in their backyards, "an ideal nesting area for rats." Then, when the Houston school board attempted to skirt a court mandate to desegregate its schools by integrating black and Mexican American students, arguing that the latter counted as "white," Chicano identity caught hold in Houston. Though not officially recognized as a racial group, their history in the United States and in Houston testified to the fact that they were treated as an undesirable racial minority. Their efforts to attain a new kind of recognition—one not predicated on assimilation into the category "white"—inspired a generation of young activists whose full stories remain to be told.²

One story that has received a great deal of attention began in May 1977 when the body of Jose Campo Torres was found in Buffalo Bayou, bruised and battered. The twenty-

three-year-old Vietnam War veteran had been arrested by Houston police for alleged “disorderly conduct.” The officers beat him mercilessly before taking him to jail, where the booking officer “refused to accept him until he received medical treatment for his injuries.” Rather than face their wrongdoing, the officers threw Torres into the bayou on the northern edge of downtown. A year later, the officers were convicted of misdemeanor “negligent homicide” and sentenced with no time to serve in prison. Mexican Americans celebrating Cinco de Mayo in Moody Park, just three miles north of where Torres had been murdered, lamented his death and clashed with police officers who, as they had done at TSU, claimed that their violent assault against the residents of the neighborhood was provoked by physical attacks against the officers. The so-called Moody Park riot, however, was not just a response to Torres’s death—though the murder and the judicial outcome certainly catalyzed the outrage they expressed in 1978. As historian Thomas H. Kreneck notes, the clash with police was also an expression of “frustration... with deplorable neighborhood conditions.”³

Over in Sunnyside, black residents lamented that private developers had been successful in securing permits to build “substandard housing” made of “lightweight material.” It seemed like their suburban dream had turned into an “instant slum.” Despite retaining many physical rural and suburban qualities even into the twenty-first century, Sunnyside was “ranked among the nation’s 25 most dangerous neighborhoods” and one of Houston’s most impoverished. Houston’s “policy of ‘containment’” of black spaces proved detrimental to these communities. White residents in surrounding areas panicked and abandoned “fine sturdily built homes, set in lush lawns and shaded by beautiful trees.” Often, those nice homes were divided up into multi-family dwelling units by blockbusters and profiteers who saw opportunities to profit off of the still segregated rental market as black people spilled



Map 19 Even allowing for changes in census tract boundaries, in 2010 Houston evinced starker residential segregation with more areas exhibiting higher rates of extreme segregation than in 1960.

out of their historic neighborhoods into adjacent areas.⁴

Houston did witness significant changes over the last decades of the twentieth century. In 1950, the city was on the brink of having 600,000 residents. By 1980, near 1.6 million people called the city home. It became the most racially and ethnically diverse city among the nation's ten largest, but black residents remain notably negatively affected by persistent patterns of segregation. Indeed, as *Map 19* illustrates, although black Houstonians have expanded out of the neighborhoods that once contained them, Census tract-level segregation is noticeably starker than it was in the waning years of Jim Crow. White and Asian Americans assiduously avoid living in areas with higher proportions of black residents. While middle class and wealthy black Houstonians have greater residential choice than they did prior to *Shelley v. Kraemer*, less affluent black residents, who continue to face employment discrimination, overexposure to police violence, food deserts, and paternalist platitudes from city officials do not have the same options.⁵

Some thought relations between black residents and the police department might improve after Mayor Kathy Whitmire appointed Dr. Lee P. Brown as the city's first black

police chief in 1982. Brown would eventually become the city's first black mayor in 1998. Despite his efforts to professionalize and standardize the Department and its procedures, Brown's tenure coincided with an acceleration of the "War on Drugs" and "War on Crime," both of which brought a heavy punitive hand to economically disadvantaged black people in communities across the country. In 1980, the city's police force remained nearly 80 percent white. The department had only "hired 35 percent of the black [officers] and 49 percent of the Hispanic [officers]" that would fulfill their proportional representation of each group's population in the city. Women accounted for less than 10 percent of the force. Though Brown achieved some improvements in non-white recruitment and in professionalizing his department, police brutality remained an epidemic in Houston into the twenty-first century, negatively affecting black, brown, and LGBT communities. In a paper outlining his philosophy of responsible policing, Brown listed a number of structural factors that he believed contributed to community disorder, but failed to mention segregation at all.⁶

Indeed, though black Houstonians have greater access to fuller participation in Houston's democratic processes, black leadership has not inevitably led to decreases in resource segregation. In the early days of January 2017, The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) delivered a scathing critique to Houston's mayor, Sylvester Turner, a product of Acres Homes and a graduate of the University of Houston and Harvard Law School. Turner "refused" to allow the city council to consider the development of a private low-income housing project in a wealthy Uptown neighborhood. Well-off white residents complained that the project would lower property values, increase traffic, and overcrowd their already packed schools. The Houston Housing Authority rebutted, noting that the construction of a new elementary school in the neighborhood

would be completed prior to the housing project's completion and the Houston Independent School District confirmed that no estimates could corroborate the claim that the new residents would increase crowding in neighborhood schools. Economists, meanwhile, have repeatedly demonstrated that low income tax credit housing does not lower property values in wealthy neighborhoods or produce declines in school performance measures. The resistance to the project, HUD found, was "unsupported by the facts," and the city's pattern of refusal to allow low-income housing projects to move forward in high opportunity neighborhoods was "racially motivated" and served to "perpetuate segregation." Underneath the rhetoric about schools and property values, HUD discovered the same kind of criminalizing rhetoric that surfaced in desegregation debates throughout the 1950s and 1960s. Residents complained, "Crime in the area will go up. Do you remember how bad the crime was after Katrina? Regardless of how charitable we would like to be; the reality is that in the lower income areas of Houston the crime is higher." HUD concluded that this was a racist dog-whistle.⁷

Turner, for his part, seemed well-attuned to the dog-whistle and capable of sending out his own thinly-veiled reassurances to white Houstonians that he would protect them. When he shut down the project, he claimed that the project would cost too much money and preferred that low-income housing be built in low-income neighborhoods.⁸ He responded to HUD's charges of racism by writing:

[T]here should be no misunderstanding about my commitment to providing options for low income families. I do not believe that only wealthy areas can provide what our children need. I have chosen to stay in the neighborhood where I grew up and I will not tell children in similar communities they must live somewhere else. Our underprivileged families should have the right to choose where they want to live, and that choice should include the right to stay in the neighborhoods where they have grown up. I categorically reject any position to the contrary.⁹

Turner implies that Acres Homes is high opportunity, even if not equivalently so, to the neighborhoods that compose Uptown, with a logic reminiscent of Carter Wesley's initial support of Texas State University for Negroes. For exceptions like the mayor it might ring true that the opportunities are there—that investment in black spaces is the solution to maintaining black community life *and* providing better life chances. I suspect, that as was true with Wesley, Turner may one day lament that he erred on the side of segregation as opposed to being daring. Turner avoided discussing race and segregation, attuned as he is to the colorblind, economically-rational rhetoric preferred by his wealthy white constituents. Nevertheless, the codes are there. High opportunity neighborhoods have proven to reduce educational, career, and income gaps for impoverished people who have had the opportunity to move into them.¹⁰ Yet, Turner argues that his neighborhood, an underserved, predominantly black, disproportionately low-income neighborhood represents a “choice” for entire groups of people seeking to escape poverty. However, one of the central contentions of “Criminalizing Space” is that a dearth of choice has defined the residential experiences of black Houstonians throughout the city's history. The “new type of segregation,” which allows for minimal socioeconomic integration and continues to rely on discourses of economics and crime, persists. Working-class and even middling black Houstonians often remain devoid of choice, which is why the city's social geography continues to be indisputably racialized.

Looking forward, then, historians should continue to tease out the ways black leaders in the mainstream have attempted to quell dissent throughout Houston's history. Where, after all, are the more extreme voices of black and white structuralists, Marxists, and labor organizers in the 1950s? And in what ways are low-income black Houstonians dissenting and resisting today? How did Lee Brown's tenure as police chief and mayor (fail

to) change the racial order of the city? How do black, brown, and Asian Americans in Houston navigate the city's twenty-first century tri-racial scheme, wherein proximity to whiteness or blackness complicates when, where, and how non-black and non-white ethnic groups can access the kinds of resources that correlate with a neighborhood's racial makeup?¹¹

Houston has remained quite successful at maintaining racial segregation, despite its increased diversity. Fourth Ward, as the Housing Authority of the City of Houston hoped in the 1940s, has been almost completely voided of its black residents. In 2010, only about one of every three residents there was black. The area continues to push out low-income renters as gated luxury apartments tower over what is left of the small single-family residents. Contractors have recklessly dug up and destroyed many of the bricks laid by freedpeople, despite the directives of city officials and the desires of black residents.¹² Meanwhile, as Fourth Ward whitenes, in Third and Fifth Wards, less than one out of every ten residents was white. The same remains true for Pleasantville, Sunnyside, and Acres Homes.¹³

Concomitantly, negative attitudes about black spaces persist. The online "City-Data" forum for Houston hosts conversations between users about cities and neighborhoods. In 2010, one user inquired about buying a home in Fourth Ward, but was "worried about safety and the area maintaining its value." Another user responded, "Yeah, it's a bit sketchy around that area," and another more explicitly noted, "The area was predominantly black, but with all the new apartments and townhomes it's changing slowly." In 2013, a user added the reply that the neighborhood seemed to be improving since some "pretty high end" townhomes had been built there, and that Sunnyside was certainly "still much worse than 4th Ward."¹⁴

Another thread from 2012 about Fifth Ward started when a user remarked, “I heard this was called the ‘Bloody Nickel.’ Is it still really dangerous? I rode my bike through the area a couple of times this week and I have to admit that it was probably the most poverty stricken area I have been to in Houston.” Without prompting, a replier warned the original poster not only to avoid Fifth Ward but also to stay away from Third Ward, which is “poverty stricken, sketchy, and deserted.” The young white woman later explained to users who were perturbed that she chose to ride her bike through Fifth Ward: “Funny thing is, I had a cop in a police car follow me until I got out on York St. where it passed over the bayou. I kept wondering why he was following me and driving so slow. Now I think he was ‘escorting’ me out of the 5th Ward.” One user was “happy to hear” that a police officer had her back. If the officers’ actions and these interpretations reveal anything, it’s that race still defines who can “belong” in different spaces throughout the city. Another user, probably black, replied, “I doubt he was ‘escorting’ you. He was probably following you to see if you were trying to buy drugs. Whenever they see white people in the hood they assume they’re buying drugs.” When a black person with family in Fifth Ward called out forum participants for their veiled racism, one user laughed and replied, “Might wanna check that chip on your shoulder at the door.”¹⁵

And when a black young professional in 2013 announced that she hoped to move to Houston with her son and begin working as a teacher, she requested information about where to best to find centers of black culture, but also stressed that she wanted her child “to grow up and attend a school in an area that is diversely made up of many cultures along with our own culture.” Only two users responded. One noted that “diversity is overrated in some facets in Houston,” as mixed-race areas also tended to be less communal, in ze’s opinion. The second reply noted that “every neighborhood is for the most part diverse

unless you start going to predominantly Black/Hispanic neighborhoods...” Underlying that observation is the fact that white, Asian, and Latina/o neighborhood preferences are not necessarily shaped by in-group preference but rather anti-black animus.¹⁶ Indeed, Houstonians can find diverse neighborhoods, but black residents will be dramatically underrepresented. The user then warned the original poster to “stay away from the Bellaire area near 610 Loop” because “they aren’t really tolerable of African Americans... and police may harass you.” The strategies for containment of black people in black spaces through state action, then, have not abated. Neither have white Houstonians’ expectations that their city and police officers will work to ensure the integrity of their residential spaces by keeping black residents locked away in their “sketchy” enclaves dissipated.¹⁷

In 1966, Blair Justice wrote to Mayor Welch about his research among black Houstonians regarding their attitudes toward the city, white people, and their living conditions. He asked, “What are the causes of racial tension in Houston?” Black residents responded unanimously that “low wages,” “unemployment,” and “housing” shaped and perpetuated racial distance and animosity. “Heavenly Houston,” for all its bluster as a city of progress, has failed to ameliorate these issues. Its earliest attempts at desegregation, despite being seemingly calm, did result in violence: fights between white and black students at Cullen Junior High School affecting Sunnyside children, McArthur Elementary School affecting Acres Homes children, and McReynolds Junior High School affecting Pleasantville children, were among the many underreported instances of white terror exacted upon black Houstonians in the 1960s. Segregation within the Houston Independent School District, both at the district level and within schools, remains a challenge.¹⁸ This, unfortunately, is a national story. Residential segregation, police brutality, unfair sentencing practices, employment discrimination, and educational inequality continue to form a web of

constraint around black people in America. Can Americans revisit the question of how strongly they can retain their wholesale commitment to liberal individualism and their indefensible faith in capitalist meritocracy in a society where race(ism) determines social and economic value? Slipshod efforts to solve seemingly isolated problems, such as addressing the racial educational achievement gap by promoting charter school growth, continue to prove ineffective, especially relative to the gains made when the nation briefly experimented with integration.¹⁹ That is, until residential segregation is affirmatively tackled, ordinary people's dual commitment to individualist values and racialized worldviews will continue to encourage new types of segregation to emerge in place of the old.

Notes

¹ Artice Vaughn, "Suspects Purity of Water Sent to Acres Homes," *Houston Forward Times*, July 15, 1967, 10.

² Guadalupe San Miguel, *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2001), 39–41; Luis Angel Toro, "A People Distinct from Others: Race and Identity in Federal Indian Law and the Hispanic Classifications in OMB Directive No. 15," *Texas Tech Law Review* 26 (1995): 1219; "Taxpayers Subsidize the Slums," n.d., box 4Jc62, folder "Research Files: Housing, 1955, 1964, 1969, 1970", Texas Observer Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Felix Tijerina quoted in Behnken, *Fighting Their Own Battles*, 57. The quote about living conditions in Houston's Second Ward can be found in Saralee Tiede, "Slums Scar Many Areas of Houston," *Houston Chronicle*, October 16, 1968, sec. 3, 23, box 2, folder 6, VISTA Collection RG F-10, Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library. Some historians have begun telling the story of the Chicano movement in Houston and note the growth of "Chicano voices" in the form of press and protest being met with resistance by Mayor Welch and the Houston Police Department. Thomas H. Kreneck, *Del Pueblo: A History of Houston's Hispanic Community* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012), 88; Guadalupe San Miguel, *Chicana/O Struggles for Education: Activism in the Community* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013).

³ Kreneck, *Del Pueblo*, 106; "ABC13 Archive: Newscast from Moody Park Riot of 1978," *ABC13 Houston*, May 6, 2016, <http://abc13.com/1326991/>; "Moody Park 3' Member Brings 'Awareness' to City," *Greenville News and Piedmont [Greenville, South Carolina]*, April 15, 1979, 28.

⁴ Tiede, "Slums Scar Many Areas of Houston," 23; "How Houston's Affordability Conversation Excludes Neighborhoods like Sunnyside," *Texas Housers*, October 7, 2015, <https://texashousers.net/2015/10/07/how-houstons-affordability-conversation-excludes-neighborhoods-like-sunnyside/>; Robert Stanton, "Two Houston Neighborhoods Called Most Dangerous in U.S.," *Houston Chronicle*, May 1, 2013, <http://www.chron.com/homes/article/Two-Houston-neighborhoods-called-most-dangerous-4476367.php>; "[Untitled Document starting 'Few Migrations of Displaced Persons...']," n.d., box 4Jc62, folder "Research Files: Housing, 1955, 1964, 1969, 1970", Texas Observer Records, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.

- ⁵ Michael O. Emerson et al., "Houston Region Grows More Racially/Ethnically Diverse, With Small Declines in Segregation: A Joint Report Analyzing Census Data from 1990, 2000, and 2010" (Houston: Kinder Institute for Urban Research & the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas, 2012), <http://kinder.rice.edu>; Emily DePrang, "The Horror Every Day: Police Brutality In Houston Goes Unpunished," *The Texas Observer*, September 4, 2013, <https://www.texasobserver.org/horror-every-day-police-brutality-houston-goes-unpunished/>; John D. Harden and Houston Chronicle, "Interactive: Do You Live in One of Houston's Many Food Deserts?," *Houston Chronicle*, December 15, 2015, <http://www.houstonchronicle.com/houston/article/Houston-still-have-long-way-to-go-to-address-food-6689980.php>; Tabathia Smith, "Blue Terror on Black America," *Umoja Sasa* 6, no. 1 (1979): 4–8.
- ⁶ Jerome H. Skolnick and David H. Bayley, *The New Blue Line: Police Innovation in Six American Cities* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988), 82, 90; Michael Massing, *The Fix* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 59; Gary David Comstock, *Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 268n64; Brown, "Innovative Policing in Houston."
- ⁷ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to Sylvester Turner, "Letter Finding Noncompliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Case Number: 06-16-R001-6," January 11, 2017, <https://www.scribd.com/document/336506979/HUD-letter-to-Mayor-Sylvester-Turner-find-civil-rights-violations>; Wenhua Di and James C. Murdoch, "The Impact of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program on Local Schools," *Journal of Housing Economics* 22, no. 4 (December 2013): 308–20, doi:10.1016/j.jhe.2013.10.002; Kelly D. Edmiston, "Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Developments and Neighborhood Property Conditions" (Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Economic Research Department, December 2011), <https://www.kansascityfed.org/publicat/reswkpap/pdf/rwp11-10.pdf>; Di and Murdoch, "The Impact of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program on Local Schools."
- On Katrina, see Chapter 6, note 77. As I note there, despite persistent and racist beliefs otherwise, Katrina evacuees did not increase the crime rate in Houston.
- ⁸ "BREAKING: HUD Says Houston Broke Law Nixing Affordable Housing Complex," *Houston Public Media*, January 13, 2017, <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2017/01/13/183650/breaking-hud-says-houston-broke-law-nixing-affordable-housing-complex/>.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Raj Chetty et al., "Where Is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129, no. 4 (November 1, 2014): 1553–1623, doi:10.1093/qje/qju022; Raj Chetty, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz, "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment," *American Economic Review* 106, no. 4 (April 1, 2016): 855–902, doi:10.1257/aer.20150572.
- ¹¹ Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "From Bi-Racial to Tri-Racial: Towards a New System of Racial Stratification in the USA," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27, no. 6 (November 1, 2004): 931–50, doi:10.1080/0141987042000268530.
- ¹² Brandon Walker, "Brick Removal Causing a Stir in Houston's Fourth Ward," *KPRC*, December 8, 2016, <http://www.click2houston.com/news/brick-removal-causing-a-stir-in-houstons-fourth-ward>; "Historic Freedmen's Town Bricks Damaged," *KHOU*, November 21, 2016, <http://www.khou.com/news/local/historic-freedmens-town-bricks-damaged/354686033>.
- ¹³ See 2010 U.S. Census.
- ¹⁴ "Need Opinion on Midtown / 4th Ward Subdivision," *City-Data.com*, n.d., <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1116407-need-opinion-midtown-4th-ward-subdivision.html#b>.
- ¹⁵ "Fifth Ward," *City-Data.com*, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1493007-fifth-ward.html>.
- ¹⁶ Lewis, Emerson, and Klineberg, "Who We'll Live With"; Maria Krysan et al., "Does Race Matter in Neighborhood Preferences? Results from a Video Experiment," *AJS; American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 2 (September 2009): 527–59.

- ¹⁷ “Single Black Woman Moving to Houston in 2014,” *City-Data.com*, accessed February 10, 2017, <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1918235-single-black-woman-moving-houston-2014-a.html>.
- ¹⁸ Laura Isensee, “Why Houston’s Gifted and Talented Classes Are Considered ‘Segregated,’” *Houston Public Media*, September 8, 2015, <https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2015/09/08/120620/why-houstons-gifted-and-talented-classes-are-considered-segregated/>; Annegret Staiger, “Whiteness as Giftedness: Racial Formation at an Urban High School,” *Social Problems* 51, no. 2 (May 1, 2004): 161–81, doi:10.1525/sp.2004.51.2.161.
- ¹⁹ Wells, *Both Sides Now*; Linda A. Renzulli and Lorraine Evans, “School Choice, Charter Schools, and White Flight,” *Social Problems* 52, no. 3 (2005): 398–418, doi:10.1525/sp.2005.52.3.398.

REFERENCES

Archival Repositories

African American Library at the Gregory School, Houston Public Library

Civil Rights Movement Veterans Digital Archives

Department of Special Collections, Robert J. Terry Library, Texas Southern University

Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin

FBI Digital Vault

Harris County Archives

Harris County District Clerk's Office Archive Warehouse, Houston, Texas

Harry S. Truman Library and Museum

Heritage Quest Online

Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library

Houston Arts and Media Oral History Collection

Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library

Houston Oral History Project, Houston Public Library

Houston Police Department Archives and Records

Houston Police Department Open Records Unit

Kelley Center for Government Information, Data, and Geospatial Services, Fondren Library,
Rice University

National Archives and Records Administration

National Archives, College Park, Maryland

New York Public Library, Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature

ProQuest History Vault

Special Collections, University of Houston Library

Texas Southern University Digital Collections, HBCU Library Alliance

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

University of California, San Diego Library Digital Archives

University of North Texas Digital Library

University of Texas at Arlington Libraries Special Collections

Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University

Periodicals

<i>African-American News & Issues</i>	<i>Ebony</i>	<i>Pittsburgh Post-Gazette</i>
<i>Afro-American</i>	<i>Free Lance-Star</i>	<i>Record-Argus [Greenville, Pennsylvania]</i>
<i>Akron Beacon Journal</i>	<i>Galveston Daily News</i>	<i>Rice Thresher</i>
<i>Baltimore Afro-American</i>	<i>Guardian</i>	<i>San Antonio Express</i>
<i>Big Spring Daily Herald</i>	<i>Houston Chronicle</i>	<i>San Antonio Register</i>
<i>Borger Daily Herald</i>	<i>Houston Forward Times</i>	<i>Sarasota Herald-Tribune</i>
<i>Breckenridge American</i>	<i>Houston Informer</i>	<i>Saturday Evening Post</i>
<i>Capitol Times [Madison, Wisconsin]</i>	<i>Houston Post</i>	<i>Texas Monthly</i>
<i>Chicago Defender</i>	<i>Houston Press</i>	<i>Texas Observer</i>
<i>Corpus Christi Caller-Times</i>	<i>Indianapolis Record</i>	<i>Times Record [Troy, New York]</i>
<i>Corpus Christi Times</i>	<i>Jet</i>	<i>Time</i>
<i>Courier-Gazette [McKinney, Texas]</i>	<i>Los Angeles Sentinel</i>	<i>Toledo Blade</i>
<i>Crisis</i>	<i>Lubbock Avalanche-Journal</i>	<i>TSU Herald</i>
<i>Daily Cougar [University of Houston]</i>	<i>Militant [SNCC]</i>	<i>Waco News-Tribune</i>
<i>Daily News [Perth, Washington]</i>	<i>New York Times</i>	<i>Wall Street Journal</i>
<i>Eagle [Bryan, Texas]</i>	<i>Orange Leader [Orange, Texas]</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>
	<i>Philadelphia Tribune</i>	<i>Wood County Record</i>
	<i>Pittsburgh Courier</i>	
	<i>Pittsburgh Post</i>	

Bibliography

"A Fourth Ward Overview." Cite: *The Architecture + Design Review of Houston*, Winter 1984.

"ABC13 Archive: Newscast from Moody Park Riot of 1978." *ABC13 Houston*, May 6, 2016. <http://abc13.com/1326991/>.

"About." *NAACP Houston*, n.d. <http://naacphouston.org/about/>.

Adler, Jeffrey S. *First in Violence, Deepest in Dirt: Homicide in Chicago, 1875-1920*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2006. <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10312790>.

———. "Shoot to Kill: The Use of Deadly Force by the Chicago Police, 1875-1920." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 38, no. 2 (2007): 233–54.

Advisory Committee on Intergovernmental Relations. *Fiscal Balance in the American Federal System*. Vol. 2: Metropolitan Fiscal Disparities. Washington, DC: Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1967.

Aiken, Charles S. "Race as a Factor in Municipal Underbounding." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 77, no. 4 (1987): 564–79.

Akers, Monte. *Flames after Midnight: Murder, Vengeance, and the Desolation of a Texas Community, Revised Edition*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.

Aldred, Lisa, and Thurgood Marshall. *Thurgood Marshall: Supreme Court Justice*. Edited by Heather Lehr Wagner and Nathan Irvin Huggins. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Pub, 2004.

Alexander, Bryant Keith. *Performing Black Masculinity: Race, Culture, and Queer Identity*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press, 2006.

Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. New York: The New Press, 2012.

Allard, Sharon Angella. "Rethinking Battered Woman Syndrome: A Black Feminist Perspective." *UCLA Women's Law Journal*, 1991. <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/62z1s13j>.

Almond, B. J. "Reflections of the Past, Promises for the Future." *Rice University News & Media*, February 22, 2016. <http://news.rice.edu/2016/02/22/reflections-of-the-past-promises-for-the-future/>.

"Along the N.A.A.C.P. Battlefront: Attorney General Cook." *The Crisis*, December 1955.

"American FactFinder." *United States Census Bureau*, 2010. <http://factfinder.census.gov/>.

- Anderson, James D. *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988.
- Anderson, José Felipé. "Freedom of Association, the Communist Party, and the Hollywood Ten: The Forgotten First Amendment Legacy of Charles Hamilton Houston." *McGeorge Law Review* 40, no. 25 (2009): E-Journal.
- Andrews III, Norwood Henry. "Sunbelt Justice: Politics, the Professions, and the History of Sentencing and Corrections in Texas since 1968." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2007.
- Apel, Dora. "Scottsboro, the Communist Party, and the NAACP: Conflicts and Desires." In *Imagery of Lynching: Black Men, White Women, and the Mob*, 47–82. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2004.
- Archer, Margaret Scotford. *Culture and Agency: The Place of Culture in Social Theory*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Armour, Jody David. *Negrophobia and Reasonable Racism: The Hidden Costs of Being Black in America*. New York: New York University Press, 1997.
- Arsenault, Raymond. *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Ash, Stephen V. *A Massacre in Memphis: The Race Riot That Shook the Nation One Year after the Civil War*, 2013.
- Avila, Eric. *Popular Culture in the Age of White Flight: Fear and Fantasy in Suburban Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
- Baker, R. Scott. *Paradoxes of Desegregation: African American Struggles for Educational Equity in Charleston, South Carolina, 1926-1972*. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2006.
- Barnes, Harper. *Never Been a Time: The 1917 Race Riot That Sparked the Civil Rights Movement*. New York: Walker & Co., 2008.
- Barr, Alwyn. *Black Texans: A History of African Americans in Texas, 1528-1995*. 2nd ed. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1996.
- . *The African Texans*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2004.
- Bauerlein, Mark. *Negrophobia: A Race Riot in Atlanta, 1906*. San Francisco: Encounter Books, 2002.

- Baum, Howell S. *Brown in Baltimore: School Desegregation and the Limits of Liberalism*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2010.
- Bauman, John F. *Public Housing, Race, and Renewal: Urban Planning in Philadelphia, 1920-1974*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987.
- Bayor, Ronald H. *Race and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Atlanta*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996.
- Bedingfield, Sid. "‘Beating down the Fear’: John H. McCray, Accommodationism and the Framing of the Civil Rights Struggle in South Carolina, 1940–1948." M.A. thesis, University of South Carolina, 2010.
- Beeth, Howard, and Cary D. Wintz. *Black Dixie: Afro-Texan History and Culture in Houston*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000.
- Behnken, Brian D. *Fighting Their Own Battles: Mexican Americans, African Americans, and the Struggle for Civil Rights in Texas*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.
- Bell, Cheryl, Martha Coven, John P. Cronan, Christian A. Garza, Janet Guggemos, and Laura Storto. "Rape and Sexual Misconduct in the Prison System: Analyzing America’s Most ‘Open’ Secret." *Yale Law & Policy Review* 18, no. 1 (January 1, 1999): 195–223.
- Benson, Michael L., and Greer Litton Fox. *When Violence Hits Home: How Economics and Neighborhood Play a Role, Research in Brief*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 2004. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/205004.pdf>.
- Bentovim, Arnon, and Bryn Williams. "Children and Adolescents: Victims Who Become Perpetrators." *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment* 4 (1998): 101–7.
- Berlin, Ira. *Free at Last: A Documentary History of Slavery, Freedom, and the Civil War*. New York: The New Press, 1992.
- Berman, David. *The Strange Demise of Jim Crow*. San Francisco: California Newsreel, 1998.
- Bernstein, David M. *Southern Pacific Railroad in Eastern Texas*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2011.
- Berrey, Stephen A. *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi*. Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2015.
- Berryhill, Michael. "Lost in the Cause." *Houston Press*, May 29, 1997. <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/lost-in-the-cause-6570813>.
- Betty T. Chapman. "‘Carter’s Folly’ Fooled Critics as First Houston Skyscraper." *Houston Business Journal*, October 1, 2006. <http://www.bizjournals.com/houston/>.

- Bird, Colin. *The Myth of Liberal Individualism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Black, Harold. "Restrictive Covenants in Relation to Segregated Negro Housing in Detroit." M.A. Thesis, Wayne State University, 1947.
- Black, Linda L. "Female Community Leaders in Houston, Texas: A Study of the Education of Ima Hogg and Christia Daniels Adair." Ph.D. dissertation, Texas A&M University, 2008.
- Blackflock-Sloan, Debra. "The Harris County Historical Commission Welcomes You to the Dedication of an Official Texas Historical Marker for Acres Homes Community," November 7, 2009. Box 1, folder 4, Linda Austin Collection MSS.0024. AAL at the Gregory School, HPL.
- Blair, Cynthia M. *I've Got to Make My Livin': Black Women's Sex Work in Turn-of-the-Century Chicago*. Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Block, Sharon. *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Bloom, Joshua, and Waldo E. Martin, Jr. *Black against Empire: The History and Politics of the Black Panther Party*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2016.
- Bobo, Lawrence, James A. Kleugel, and Ryan A. Smith. "Laissez-Faire Racism: The Crystallization of a Kinder, Gentler, Antiracist Ideology." In *Racial Attitudes in the 1990s: Continuity and Change*, edited by Jack Martin and Steven A. Tuch, 15–44. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997.
- "BOCA Deed Restrictions," 1960.
<http://www.daveshine.org/BOCADeedRestr/BOCADeedRestrictions.htm>.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo. "From Bi-Racial to Tri-Racial: Towards a New System of Racial Stratification in the USA." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 27, no. 6 (November 1, 2004): 931–50. doi:10.1080/0141987042000268530.
- . *White Supremacy and Racism in the Post-Civil Rights Era*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001.
- Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo, and David Deitrich. "The Sweet Enchantment of Color-Blind Racism in Obamerica." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 634, no. 1 (2011): 190–206.
- Boudreaux, Tommie D., and Alice M. Gatson. *African Americans of Galveston*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2013.
- Boyle, Kevin. *Arc of Justice: A Saga of Race, Civil Rights, and Murder in the Jazz Age*. New York, N.Y.: Henry Holt and Co., 2005.

- Boyles, Andrea S. *Race, Place, and Suburban Policing: Too Close for Comfort*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015.
- Bradley, Barrie Scardino. *Houston's Hermann Park: A Century of Community*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.
- "BREAKING: HUD Says Houston Broke Law Nixing Affordable Housing Complex." *Houston Public Media*, January 13, 2017.
<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2017/01/13/183650/breaking-hud-says-houston-broke-law-nixing-affordable-housing-complex/>.
- "Briargrove." *Briargrove Property Owners, Inc.* Accessed May 6, 2015. <http://briargrove.org/>.
- Brinckerhoff, Parsons, Federal Transit Administration, and Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County. "Southeast Corridor, Houston: Environmental Impact Statement." Houston: METRO, 2006.
- Britt, Theron. "Law of the Intangible: Desegregation, Diversity, and the Individual." *College Literature* 35, no. 3 (July 1, 2008): 142–57.
- Brown, Kathleen M. "'Changed...Into the Fashion of a Man': The Politics of Sexual Difference in a Seventeenth-Century Anglo-American Settlement." In *The Devil's Lane: Sex and Race in the Early South*, edited by Catherine Clinton and Michele Gillespie, 39–56. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Brown, Lee P. "Innovative Policing in Houston." *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 494 (1987): 129–34.
- Brown, Michael K., Martin Carnoy, Elliott Currie, Troy Duster, David B. Oppenheimer, Marjorie M. Shultz, and David Wellman. *Whitewashing Race: The Myth of a Color-Blind Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003.
- Brumbalow, Ted Winfield. "An Analysis of the Educational Program of the State Juvenile Training School." M.A. thesis, University of Texas at Austin, 1937.
- Brunson, Rod K., and Jody Miller. "Young Black Men and Urban Policing in the United States." *British Journal of Criminology* 46, no. 4 (2006): 613–40.
- Bullard, Robert D. *Dumping In Dixie: Race, Class, And Environmental Quality, Third Edition*. 3rd ed. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2000.
- . *Invisible Houston: The Black Experience in Boom and Bust*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 1987.
- . "The Legacy of American Apartheid and Environmental Racism." *Journal of Civil Rights and Economic Development* 9, no. 2 (1994): 445–74.

- . “The Mountains of Houston: Environmental Justice and the Politics of Garbage.”
Cite: *The Architecture + Design Review of Houston* 93 (2014): 28–33.
- Bullock, Henry Allen. “Urban Homicide in Theory and Fact.” *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 45, no. 5 (1955): 565–75.
- Burns, Richard. “Taylor, Hobart T., Sr.” *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 15, 2010.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fta30>.
- Bush, William S. “Part I The Path to the Texas Youth Council: Creating a Protective Umbrella for Juvenile Offenders.” *Protecting Texas’ Most Precious Resource: A History of Juvenile Justice Policy in Texas*. Texas Criminal Justice Coalition, 2008.
<http://www.criminaljusticecoalition.org>.
- . *Who Gets a Childhood?: Race and Juvenile Justice in Twentieth-Century Texas*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge, 1999.
- Butler, Paul. ““Do You Live in This Neighborhood?”” In *Twelve Angry Men: True Stories of Being a Black Man in America Today*, edited by Gregory Parks and Matthew W. Hughey, 111–24. New York: New Press, 2012.
- Bynum, Thomas L. *NAACP Youth and the Fight for Black Freedom, 1936-1965*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2013.
- Cable, Dustin. “The Racial Dot Map.” *Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia*, July 2013. <http://www.coopercenter.org/demographics/Racial-Dot-Map>.
- Cameron, Christopher Alain. “Freeing Themselves: Puritanism, Slavery, and Black Abolitionists in Massachusetts, 1641-1788.” M.A. Thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2008.
- Capooth, Luther Wayne. *The History of the Millsaps*. Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1993.
- Carleton, Don E. *Red Scare: Right-Wing Hysteria, Fifties Fanaticism, and Their Legacy in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014.
- Carney, Howard A. Relating to providing that in capital cases the State and the defendant shall be entitled to fifteen peremptory challenges; providing that when two or more defendants are tried together the State shall be entitled to eight peremptory challenges; providing that in capital cases where the death penalty has been waived by the State’s Attorney by filing his written waiver which has been approved by the Court, the State and the defendant shall be entitled to the number of peremptory

challenges as is now provided by law in the trial of noncapital felony cases, 140 SB § (1951).

Carr, Leslie G. *"Color-blind" Racism*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc, 1997.

Carroll, Mark M. *Homesteads Ungovernable: Families, Sex, Race, and the Law in Frontier Texas, 1823-1860*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001.

Carroll, Jr., B. H., ed. *Standard History of Houston Texas: From a Study of the Original Sources*. Knoxville: H. W. Crew & Co., 1912.

Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1981.

Carter, Dan T. *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1969.

Carter, Dan T. *The Politics of Rage: George Wallace, the Origins of the New Conservatism, and the Transformation of American Politics*. 2nd ed. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000.

Carter v. Texas, 177 U.S. 442 (1900).

Celarent, Barbara. "Caste, Class, and Race by Oliver Cromwell Cox." *American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 5 (2010): 1664–69.

Cell, John Whitson. *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.

Census of Housing: 1950 (Taken as a Part of the Seventeenth Decennial Census of the United States). Vol. V: Block Statistics. Pt. 4. Houston - Los Angeles. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1953.

Census of Population, 1960: The Eighteenth Decennial Census of the United States. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963.

Charles, Douglas M. *Hoover's War on Gays: Exposing the FBI's "Sex Deviates" Program*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2015.

"Charles Edward Freeman III." *Rice University between Decisions: From Co-Education to Integration (1957-1970) Digital Exhibit*. Accessed August 20, 2016.
<http://exhibits.library.rice.edu/exhibits/show/between-decisions/race/charlie-freeman>.

Chermak, Steven M. *Searching for a Demon: The Media Construction of the Militia Movement*. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002.

- Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, and Lawrence F. Katz. "The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment." *The American Economic Review* 106, no. 4 (April 1, 2016): 855–902. doi:10.1257/aer.20150572.
- Chetty, Raj, Nathaniel Hendren, Patrick Kline, and Emmanuel Saez. "Where Is the Land of Opportunity? The Geography of Intergenerational Mobility in the United States." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129, no. 4 (November 1, 2014): 1553–1623. doi:10.1093/qje/qju022.
- Chivers, Walter R. "The Negro Delinquent Section I: Crime and the Community." *Yearbook 1942* (1942): 46–59.
- City of Houston Planning & Development Department. "Annexations in Houston or How We Grew to 667 Square Miles in 175 Years." n.d.
- Clark, John A. Letter to Tyson Brady, January 20, 1949. Box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers. Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- . Letter to Alfred Groner, January 20, 1949. Box 1, folder 1, Brady Tyson Papers. Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.
- Clark, William A. V. "Residential Preferences and Residential Choices in a Multiethnic Context." *Demography* 29, no. 3 (August 1, 1992): 451–66. doi:10.2307/2061828.
- Clayson, William S. *Freedom Is Not Enough: The War on Poverty and the Civil Rights Movement in Texas*. Reprint edition. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2011.
- Clayton Jr., Obie, Christopher R. Geller, Sahadeo Patram, Travis Patton, and David L. Sjoquist. "Racial Attitudes and Perceptions in Atlanta." In *The Atlanta Paradox*, edited by David L. Sjoquist, 59–87. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000.
- Clinton Park Development Company v. Commissioner, 11 T.C.M. 768 (United States Tax Court 1952).
- . *No Color Is My Kind: The Life of Eldrewey Stearns and the Integration of Houston*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 1997.
- Collins, Freddie. Source Material for Patterns of Negro Segregation: Houston Texas. Interview by H. J. Walker, August 6, 1939. Kelley Center for Government Information, Data and Geospatial Services, Fondren Library, Rice University; crediting New York Public Library, Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. "It's All in the Family: Intersections of Gender, Race, and Nation." *Hypatia* 13, no. 3 (August 1, 1998): 62–82. doi:10.1111/j.1527-2001.1998.tb01370.x.

- Communist Activities in the Central California Area: Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities House of Representatives Ninetieth Congress, First Session.* Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964.
- “Communist Infiltration of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.” Federal Bureau of Investigation, June 3, 1957. NAACP Part 7 of 8. FBI Records: The Vault. <https://vault.fbi.gov/NAACP/>.
- Communist Party of the United States of America, Texas State Committee. “Free Texas from Monopoly Control! Bring the New Deal to Texas! For Democracy, Security, Jobs, Peace!,” 1938. <http://www.communistpartyhouston.org/apps/documents/>.
- Comstock, Gary David. *Violence against Lesbians and Gay Men*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.
- Congressional Record: Proceedings and Debates of the 88th Congress*. U.S. Government Printing Office, 1963.
- Conn, Steven. *Americans against the City: Anti-Urbanism in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Connell, R. W. *Masculinities*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Connell, R. W., and James W. Messerschmidt. “Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept.” *Gender and Society* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2005): 829–59.
- Connolly, N. D. B. *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow South Florida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- Cook, Charles O. “Houston Informer.” In *Encyclopedia of African American History, 1896 to the Present: From the Age of Segregation to the Twenty-First Century*, edited by Paul Finkelman, 462–63. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Cook, Charles O., and Barry J. Kaplan. “Civic Elites and Urban Planning: Houston’s River Oaks.” *East Texas Historical Journal* 15, no. 2 (1977): 29–37.
- “CPI Inflation Calculator.” *Bureau of Labor Statistics*. Accessed November 10, 2013. <http://data.bls.gov/>.
- Crenshaw, Kimberlé. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics.” *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1989, 139–67.
- Crespino, Joseph. *In Search of Another Country: Mississippi and the Conservative Counterrevolution*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

- Cuff, Dana. "Mirrors of Power: Reflective Professionals in the Neighborhood." In *The Power of Geography: How Territory Shapes Social Life*, edited by Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear. New York: Routledge, 2014.
- Curry, Karen D. "Sunnyside Update: A Health-Information Needs-Assessment." Bellaire, Texas: Texas AHEC East - Greater Houston Region, 2012. <http://www.ghahec.org/>.
- Curtin, Mary Ellen. "Strong People and Strong Leaders: African American Women and the Modern Black Freedom Struggle." In *The Practice of U.S. Women's History Narratives, Intersections, and Dialogues*, edited by S. J. Kleinberg, Eileen Boris, and Vicki Ruíz, 308–28. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007.
- Curtis, Michael Kent. *No State Shall Abridge: The Fourteenth Amendment and the Bill of Rights*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1987.
- Curtis, Nancy C. *Black Heritage Sites: The South*. New York: The New Press, 1998.
- Daiya, Kavita. *Violent Belongings: Partition, Gender, and National Culture in Postcolonial India*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.
- David, Emmanuel, and Elaine Pitt Enarson, eds. *The Women of Katrina: How Gender, Race, and Class Matter in an American Disaster*. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2012.
- DeSena, Judith N. *Protecting One's Turf*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2005.
- Deutsch, Sarah. "Landscape of Enclaves: Race Relations in the West, 1865-1990." In *Under an Open Sky: Rethinking America's Western Past*, edited by William Cronon and George A. Miles, 110–31. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1993.
- Di, Wenhua, and James C. Murdoch. "The Impact of the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program on Local Schools." *Journal of Housing Economics* 22, no. 4 (December 2013): 308–20. doi:10.1016/j.jhe.2013.10.002.
- Dorr, Lisa Lindquist. *White Women, Rape, and the Power of Race in Virginia, 1900-1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- Doyle, Henry E. Johnnie Lee Morris, Petitioner, v. State of Texas: Petitioner's Brief, 345 U.S. 951 (n.d.).
- Drucker, A. P. *On the Trail of the Juvenile-Adult Offender: An Intensive Study of 100 County Jail Cases*. Chicago: Juvenile Protective Association of Chicago, 1912.
- Du Bois, W. E. B. *Crisis*. Vol. 9. New York: National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1914.

- Du Bois, W. E. B, Booker T Washington, Marcus Garvey, and A. Philip Randolph Wintz, Cary D. *African American Political Thought, 1890-1930: Washington, Du Bois, Garvey, and Randolph*. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1995.
- Dubois, Laurent. *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Dugan, Laura, Daniel S. Nagin, and Richard Rosenfeld. "Do Domestic Violence Services Save Lives?" *National Institute of Justice Journal*, no. 250 (2003): 20–25.
- Dulaney, W. Marvin. "Whatever Happened to the Civil Rights Movement in Dallas, Texas?" In *Essays on the American Civil Rights Movement*, edited by John Dittmer, George C. Wright, Marvin Dulaney, and Kathleen Underwood, 66–89. College Station: Published for University of Texas at Arlington by Texas A&M University Press, 1993.
- Dumont, Louis. *Essays on Individualism: Modern Ideology in Anthropological Perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Dyson, Michael Eric. *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster*. New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2006.
- Eagles, Charles W. *The Price of Defiance: James Meredith and the Integration of Ole Miss*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.
- Eby, Clare. "Slouching toward Beastliness: Richard Wright's Anatomy of Thomas Dixon." *African American Review* 35, no. 3 (2001): 439–58. doi:10.2307/2903313.
- Edmiston, Kelly D. "Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Developments and Neighborhood Property Conditions." Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City Economic Research Department, December 2011. <https://www.kansascityfed.org/publicat/reswkpap/pdf/rwp11-10.pdf>.
- Egerton, John. *Speak Now Against The Day: The Generation Before the Civil Rights Movement in the South*. New York: Knopf, 2013.
- Ehrenhalt, Alan. *The Great Inversion and the Future of the American City*. New York: Vintage Books, 2013.
- Elliott, Mark. *Color Blind Justice: Albion Tourgee and the Quest for Racial Equality from the Civil War to Plessy V. Ferguson*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Emami, Zohreh, and Paulette I. Olson. *Engendering Economics: Conversations with Women Economists in the United States*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- Emerson, Michael O., Jenifer Bratter, Junia Howell, P. Wilner Jeanty, and Mike Cline. "Houston Region Grows More Racially/Ethnically Diverse, With Small Declines in

Segregation: A Joint Report Analyzing Census Data from 1990, 2000, and 2010." Houston: Kinder Institute for Urban Research & the Hobby Center for the Study of Texas, 2012. <http://kinder.rice.edu>.

Entman, Robert M., and Kimberly A. Gross. "Race to Judgment: Stereotyping Media and Criminal Defendants." *Law and Contemporary Problems* 71, no. 4 (2008): 93–133.

Ex parte Morris, 243 S.W.2d 852 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1951).

F, P. G. "Notes on Recent Developments in the South." *Political Affairs* 31 (May 5, 1952): 41–51.

"F. Carrington Weems - Honors, Achievements, Awards and Publications." *Weems Collections*, n.d. <http://weemscollections.com/>.

Fainstein, Norman I., Susan S. Fanstein, and Alex Schwartz. "Economic Shifts and Land Use in the Global City: New York, 1940–1987." In *Atop the Urban Hierarchy*, edited by Robert A. Beauregard, 45–86. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1989.

Fairclough, Adam. *Better Day Coming: Blacks and Equality, 1890–2000*. New York: Penguin Books, 2002.

Farrar, Roy Montgomery. *The Story of Buffalo Bayou and the Houston Ship Channel 1820–1926*. Houston: Houston Chamber of Commerce, 1926.

"FBI Files on SNCC." *Internet Archive*, n.d. <https://archive.org/details/StudentNonviolentCoordinatingCommittee>.

Feagin, Joe R. *Free Enterprise City: Houston in Political-Economic Perspective*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1988.

Federal Housing Administration. "Underwriting Manual: Underwriting and Valuation Procedure Under Title II of the National Housing Act, Rev. April 1, 1936." *Urban Oasis*, n.d. <http://urbanoasis.org/projects/fha/FHAUnderwritingManualPtl.html>.

Feldman, Glenn. *The Irony of the Solid South: Democrats, Republicans, and Race, 1865–1944*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2013.

Fenberg, Steven. *Unprecedented Power: Jesse Jones, Capitalism, and the Common Good*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.

Ferguson, Cheryl Caldwell. *Highland Park and River Oaks: The Origins of Garden Suburban Community Planning in Texas*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014.

———. "River Oaks: 1920s Suburban Planning and Development in Houston." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 104, no. 2 (October 1, 2000): 190–228.

- Fernandez, Demond. "City Leaders Announce Plans to Renovate Historic Emancipation Park." *ABC13 Houston*, June 19, 2012. <http://abc13.com/archive/8707001/>.
- Fields, Barbara J., and Karen E. Fields. "How Race Is Conjured." *Jacobin*, June 29, 2015. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2015/06/karen-barbara-fields-racecraft-dolezal-racism/>.
- Fields, Karen E., and Barbara J. Fields. *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. London: Verso, 2012.
- "Fifth Ward." *City-Data.com*. Accessed February 10, 2017. <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1493007-fifth-ward.html>.
- Flynn, John P. "Booker T. Washington: Uncle Tom or Wooden Horse." *Journal of Negro History* 54, no. 3 (July 1, 1969): 262–74. doi:10.2307/2716669.
- Fogelson, Robert M. *Bourgeois Nightmares: Suburbia, 1870-1930*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007.
- Ford, Shane. *Shine A Light: My Year with "Blind" Willie Johnson*. Self-published memoir, 2014.
- Francis, Megan Ming. *Civil Rights and the Making of the Modern American State*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Frankenberg, Ruth. *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1988.
- Frazier, John W., Florence M. Margai, and Eugene Tetley-Fio. *Race and Place: Equity Issues in Urban America*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2003.
- Frederickson, Kari. *The Dixiecrat Revolt and the End of the Solid South, 1932-1968*. Chapel Hill: Univ of North Carolina Press, 2003.
- Fredrickson, George M. *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817-1914*. New York: Harper & Row, 1971.
- Freund, David M. P. *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Friedan, Betty. *The Feminine Mystique*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1963.
- Fukurai, Hiroshi, Edgar W. Butler, and Richard Krooth. *Race and the Jury: Racial Disenfranchisement and the Search for Justice*. New York: Springer, 1993.
- Gabel, Milton, and Hortense Gabel. "Texas Newspaper Opinion: I." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 10, no. 1 (1946): 57–70.

- . "Texas Newspaper Opinion: II." *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 10, no. 2 (1946): 201–15.
- Gallaher, Carolyn. *Key Concepts in Political Geography*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2009.
- Gavins, Raymond. *The Perils and Prospects of Southern Black Leadership*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1977.
- Gerber, David A. *Black Ohio and the Color Line, 1860-1915*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976.
- Gibbs, Roshanda. "Texas Southern University: A Frontier in Education for Blacks in Houston." *The Texas Historian* 62, no. 3 (February 2002): 1–3.
- Giddings, Paula. *Ida: A Sword among Lions*. New York, N.Y.: Amistad, 2008.
- Giddings, Paula J. *When and Where I Enter: The Impact of Black Women on Race and Sex in America*. New York: William Morrow, 1984.
- Gifford, Laura Jane, and Daniel K. Williams. *The Right Side of the Sixties: Reexamining Conservatism's Decade of Transformation*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- Gillette, Michael L. "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People." *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 15, 2010. <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ven01>.
- . "The Rise of the NAACP in Texas." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 81, no. 4 (April 1978): 393–416.
- Glasper, Kevin L. "The Political, Economic & Social Implications of Mayor Lee P. Brown." In *Perspectives in Black Politics and Black Leadership*, edited by John Davis, 99–116. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007.
- Glasrud, Bruce A., ed. *Anti-Black Violence in Twentieth-Century Texas*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015.
- Glasrud, Bruce Allen. "Black Texans, 1900-1930: A History." Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1969.
- Godfrey, Phoebe. "Bayonets, Brainwashing, and Bathrooms: The Discourse of Race, Gender, and Sexuality in the Desegregation of Little Rock's Central High." *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 62, no. 1 (April 1, 2003): 42–67. doi:10.2307/40023302.
- Goldstone, Dwonna. "Heman Sweatt and the Racial Integration of the University of Texas School of Law." *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education*, no. 54 (December 1, 2006): 88–97. doi:10.2307/25073597.
- Gordon v. State, 161 Tex. Crim. 594 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1955).

- Govenar, Alan B. *Lightnin' Hopkins: His Life and Blues*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2010.
- Gray, Kenneth E. *A Report on the Politics of Houston*. Vol. 2. Cambridge, Mass.: Joint Center for Urban Studies of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Harvard University, 1960.
- Green, Adam Isaiah. "Gay but Not Queer: Toward a Post-Queer Study of Sexuality." *Theory and Society* 31, no. 4 (August 1, 2002): 521–45.
- Greenberg, Cheryl. "The Southern Jewish Community and the Struggle for Civil Rights." In *African Americans and Jews in the Twentieth Century: Studies in Convergence and Conflict*, edited by V. P. Franklin, Nancy L. Grant, Harold Kletnick, and Genna Rae McNeil, 123–64. Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1998.
- Greene, Ronnie. *Shots on the Bridge: Police Violence and Cover-up in the Wake of Katrina*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2016.
- Gross, Kali N. *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880-1910*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2006.
- Guérin, Daniel. *Negroes on the March: A Frenchman's Report on the American Negro Struggle*. New York: Weissman, 1956.
- Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1998.
- Haley, Sarah. "'Like I Was a Man': Chain Gangs, Gender, and the Domestic Carceral Sphere in Jim Crow Georgia." *Signs* 39, no. 1 (September 2013): 53–77. doi:10.1086/670769.
- Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 4 (March 1, 2005): 1233–63. doi:10.2307/3660172.
- Harlan, Louis R. *Booker T. Washington: The Wizard of Tuskegee, 1901-1915*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Harris, Cheryl. "Whiteness as Property." In *Black on White: Black Writers on What It Means to Be White*, edited by David R. Roediger, 103–18. New York: Schocken, 1999.
- Harris, David R. "'Property Values Drop When Blacks Move In, Because...': Racial and Socioeconomic Determinants of Neighborhood Desirability." *American Sociological Review* 64, no. 3 (1999): 461–79. doi:10.2307/2657496.
- Harris County Sheriff's Department, 1837-2005*. Nashville: Turner Publishing Company, 2005.
- Haynes, George E. "Race Riots in Relation to Democracy." *The Survey: Social, Charitable, Civic: A Journal of Constructive Philanthropy* 142, no. 19 (August 9, 1919): 697–99.

- Haynes, Robert V. *A Night of Violence: The Houston Riot of 1917*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1976.
- Hazlewood, Claudia. "Mykawa, TX." *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 15, 2010.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hnm76>.
- Heintze, Michael R. "Black Colleges." *The Handbook of Texas Online* | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA), June 12, 2010.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/khb01>.
- Helmer, Bill. "Nightmare in Houston." *The Texas Observer*, June 23, 1967. Record Group 453, Records of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, National Archives, College Park, Maryland.
- Helper, Rose. *Racial Policies and Practices of Real Estate Brokers*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1969.
- Herman, Susan N. "Why the Court Loves Batson: Representation-Reinforcement, Colorblindness, and the Jury." *Tulane Law Review* 67 (1993): 1807–53.
- Herman Lee Ross v. State, 156 Tex. Crim. 164 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1950).
- Hill, Lance. *Deacons for Defense: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement: Armed Resistance and the Civil Rights Movement*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Hill Collins, Patricia. "A Telling Difference: Dominance, Strength, and Black Masculinities." In *Progressive Black Masculinities?*, 73–98. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Hine, Darlene Clark. *Black Victory: The Rise and Fall of the White Primary in Texas*. Columbia, Mo: University of Missouri, 2003.
- . *Hine Sight: Black Women and the Re-Construction of American History*. Brooklyn, NY: Carlson Pub., 1994.
- Hine, Darlene Clark, and Earnestine L. Jenkins. *A Question of Manhood: A Reader in U.S. Black Men's History and Masculinity*. Vol. 2: The 19th Century: From Emancipation to Jim Crow. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001.
- Hinton, Elizabeth. *From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016.
- Hirsch, Arnold R. *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

"Historic Freedmen's Town Bricks Damaged." *KHOU*, November 21, 2016.
<http://www.khou.com/news/local/historic-freedmens-town-bricks-damaged/354686033>.

"Historical Marker Detail for Acres Homes Community." *Harris County Historical Commission*, n.d.
<http://www.historicalcommission.hctx.net/markerDetail.aspx?marker=9531>.

"Historical Statistics of the United States Millennial Edition Online." Cambridge University Press, n.d. <http://hsus.cambridge.org/>.

"History | 75 Years in the Making..." *Clinton Park*, n.d.
<http://clintonpark.org/index.php/history/>.

Hoelscher, Steven. "Making Place, Making Race: Performances of Whiteness in the Jim Crow South." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 93, no. 3 (September 1, 2003): 657–86.

Hollinger, David. "Amalgamation and Hypodescent: The Question of Ethnoracial Mixture in the History of the United States." *The American Historical Review* 5, no. 108 (December 2003): 1363–90. doi:10.1086/529971.

Honey, Michael Keith. *Black Workers Remember: An Oral History of Segregation, Unionism, and the Freedom Struggle*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.

hooks, bell. *Killing Rage: Ending Racism*. New York: H. Holt and Co, 1995.

Houston: A History and Guide. Houston: Anson Jones Press, 1942.

Houston and South Texas: A Newspaper Reference Work. Houston: Houston Chronicle, 1921.
<http://archive.org/details/houstonsouthtexa00hou>.

"Houston's Carnegie Libraries." *Arch-Ive.org*. Accessed May 5, 2016. <http://archive.org/archive/carnegie-houston/>.

"How Houston's Affordability Conversation Excludes Neighborhoods like Sunnyside." *Texas Housers*, October 7, 2015. <https://texashousers.net/2015/10/07/how-houstons-affordability-conversation-excludes-neighborhoods-like-sunnyside/>.

"Howling on Dowling." *Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston*, Winter 2005.

Hunt, Helen A. Letter to Allan Shivers, June 18, 1954. Executive Department federal files, 1953-1954 (bulk 1954), Records of Texas Governor Allan Shivers. Archives and Information Services Division, Texas State Library and Archives Commission.

- Hunter, Tera W. *To "Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Hustwit, William P. "From Caste to Color Blindness: James J. Kilpatrick's Segregationist Semantics." *Journal of Southern History*. 77, no. 3 (2011): 638–70.
- Ifill, Sherrilyn A. *On the Courthouse Lawn: Confronting the Legacy of Lynching in the Twenty-First Century*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2007.
- Ingersoll, Richard. "Houston's Academic Enclaves." In *Ephemeral City: Cite Looks at Houston*, edited by Barrie Scardino, William F. Stern, and Bruce C. Webb, 173–84. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.
- Isenberg, Nancy. *White Trash: The 400-Year Untold History of Class in America*. New York: Penguin, 2016.
- Isensee, Laura. "Why Houston's Gifted and Talented Classes Are Considered 'Segregated.'" *Houston Public Media*, September 8, 2015.
<https://www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/news/2015/09/08/120620/why-houstons-gifted-and-talented-classes-are-considered-segregated/>.
- Iwamoto, Derek. "Tupac Shakur: Understanding the Identity Formation of Hyper-Masculinity of a Popular Hip-Hop Artist." *Black Scholar* 33 (2003): 44–49.
- Jackson, Andrew Webster. *A Sure Foundation: A Sketch of Negro Life in Texas*. Houston, 1940.
- Jackson II, Ronald L. *Scripting the Black Masculine Body: Identity, Discourse, and Racial Politics in Popular Media*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2006.
- James, C. L. R., and James Walvin. *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*. 2nd ed. New York: Vintage Books, 1963.
- James Messerschmidt. *Crime as Structured Action: Gender, Race, Class, and Crime in the Making*. New York: SAGE, 1997.
- Janowitz, Morris. *Social Control of Escalated Riots*. Chicago: University of Chicago, Center for Policy Study, 1968.
- Johnny Lee Morris v. State, 158 Tex. Crim. 516 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1952).
- Johnny Lee Morris v. State, 251 S.W.2d 731 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1952).
- Johnson, Arno H. "New Census Shows City Suburbs Are Fastest Growing Markets." *Sales Management* 31 (1940).

- Johnson, James Weldon. "The Luther Collins Case." In *In Search of Democracy: The NAACP Writings of James Weldon Johnson, Walter White, and Roy Wilkins (1920-1977)*, edited by Sondra Kathryn Wilson, 64. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Johnson, Nicholas. *Negroes and the Gun: The Black Tradition of Arms*. Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2014.
- Jones, Charles E. "Arm Yourself or Harm Yourself: People's Party II and the Black Panther Party in Houston, Texas." In *On the Ground: The Black Panther Party in Communities across America*, edited by Judson L. Jeffries, 3–40. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2010.
- Jones, Claudia. "An End to the Neglect of the Problem of the Negro Woman [Pamphlet]," June 1949. Box 2.325/L30, folder "Claudia Jones, 'An End to the Neglect of the Problems of the Negro Woman'", Black Texas Women's Archive, 1860-1865, 1897-1994. Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.
- Jones, Howard. *The Red Diary: A Chronological History of Black Americans in Houston and Some Neighboring Harris County Communities—122 Years Later*. Austin: Nortex Press, 1991.
- Jordan, Winthrop D. *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550-1812*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968.
- . *Violence in the City*. Fort Worth: Leo Potishman Fund, Texas Christian University Press, 1969.
- Kaestle, Carl F., and Eric Foner. *Pillars of the Republic: Common Schools and American Society, 1780-1860*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- Kahrl, Andrew W. "The Power to Destroy: Discriminatory Property Assessments and the Struggle for Tax Justice in Mississippi." *Journal of Southern History* 82, no. 3 (August 2016): 579–616.
- Kaplan, Barry J. "Race, Income, and Ethnicity: Residential Change in a Houston Community, 1920-1970." *Houston History Magazine* Winter (1981): 178–202.
- Karlan, Pamela S. "Race, Rights, and Remedies in Criminal Adjudication." *Michigan Law Review* 96, no. 7 (1998): 2001–30.
- Karson, Larry. "Choosing Justice: The Implications of a Key-Man System for Selecting a Grand Jury." presented at the Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice Conference, Houston, Texas, October 8, 2004.
- Kauffman, Kelsey. *Prison Officers and Their World*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.

- Kean, Melissa Fitzsimons. "‘At a Most Uncomfortable Speed’: The Desegregation of the South’s Private Universities, 1945--1964." Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 2000. <https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/19521>.
- Keaton, Angela Frye. "Unholstered and Unquestioned: The Rise of Post-World War II American Gun Cultures." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, 2006.
- Kellar, William Henry. *Enduring Legacy: The M.D. Anderson Foundation & the Texas Medical Center*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2014.
- . *Make Haste Slowly: Moderates, Conservatives, and School Desegregation in Houston*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 1999.
- Kelley, Blair Murphy. *Right to Ride: Streetcar Boycotts and African American Citizenship in the Era of Plessy v. Ferguson*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Kelley, Robin D. G. "‘We Are Not What We Seem’: Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South." *Journal of American History* 80, no. 1 (June 1, 1993): 75–112. doi:10.2307/2079698.
- Kellock, Harold. *Parson Weems of the Cherry-Tree*. New York: The Century Co., 1928.
- Kilpatrick, Judith. "Desegregating the University of Arkansas School of Law: L. Clifford Davis and the Six Pioneers." *The Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 58, no. 2 (2009): 123–56.
- King, Gilbert. *Devil in the Grove: Thurgood Marshall, the Groveland Boys, and the Dawn of a New America*. New York: Harper, 2013.
- Kirkland, Kate Sayen. *Captain James A. Baker of Houston, 1857-1941*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012.
- Kirkpatrick, F. D. "The Police Attack at Texas Southern." *Militant*, June 26, 1967.
- Kitch, Sally. *The Specter of Sex: Gendered Foundations of Racial Formation in the United States*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2009.
- Klarman, Michael J. "The Racial Origins of Modern Criminal Procedure." *Michigan Law Review* 99, no. 7 (2000): 48–97.
- . "White Primary Rulings: A Case Study in the Consequences of Supreme Court Decisionmaking." *Florida State University Law Review* 29, no. 1 (2001): 55–107.
- Kleiner, Diana J. "Fifth Ward, Houston." *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 12, 2010. <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hpfhk>.

- Kluger, Richard. *Simple Justice: The History of Brown v. Board of Education and Black America's Struggle for Equality*. New York: Vintage Books, 2004.
- Kreneck, Thomas H. *Del Pueblo: A History of Houston's Hispanic Community*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2012.
- Krivo, Lauren J., and Ruth D. Peterson. "Extremely Disadvantaged Neighborhoods and Urban Crime." *Social Forces* 75, no. 2 (1996): 619–48. doi:10.2307/2580416.
- Kruse, Kevin M. *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Krysan, Maria, Mick P. Couper, Reynolds Farley, and Tyrone Forman. "Does Race Matter in Neighborhood Preferences? Results from a Video Experiment." *AJS; American Journal of Sociology* 115, no. 2 (September 2009): 527–59.
- Kuhlman, Martin. "Direct Action at the University of Texas During the Civil Rights Movement, 1960-1965." In *The African American Experience in Texas: An Anthology*, edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and James Smallwood, 318–34. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007.
- Lamont, Michele, and Mario Luis Small. "How Culture Matters: Enriching Our Understanding of Poverty." In *The Colors of Poverty: Why Racial and Ethnic Disparities Persist*, edited by Ann Chih Lin and David R. Harris. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation, 2008.
- Landes, Joan B. *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Landry, Bart. *Black Working Wives: Pioneers of the American Family Revolution*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002.
- Landry, Ryan, and Elizabeth Rankin. "Violent Crime Rates in Houston Before and After Hurricane Katrina." *Southwestern Economic Review: Research Notes*, 2008, 1–2.
- Lang, Sabine. "Various Kinds of Two-Spirit People: Gender Variance and Homosexuality in Native American Communities." In *Two-Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, edited by Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, 110–18. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997.
- Lassiter, Matthew D. *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006.
- Lassiter, Matthew D., and Joseph Crespino, eds. *The Myth of Southern Exceptionalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Lavergne, Gary M. *Before Brown: Heman Marion Sweatt, Thurgood Marshall, and the Long Road to Justice*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.

Lawson, Rev. William "Bill." Interview by Veronica Perry, August 12, 1974. HMRC Oral History Collection. Houston Area Digital Archives, Houston Public Library.

Lawson, William A. Interview by Daisha M. Bennet, n.d.

Lee, Donald P. Interview by Beatrice Mitchell, May 15, 2008. Houston Arts and Media Oral Histories. MS 524. Woodson Research Center, Fondren Library, Rice University.

Lee, E. Bun. *TSU Meets the Press: White Newspaper Coverage of a Black University in Houston, Texas, 1947-1987*. Houston: D. Armstrong Co. Inc., 1989.

Lerner, Melvin J. *The Belief in a Just World: A Fundamental Delusion*. New York: Plenum Press, 1980.

Levengood, Paul Alejandro. "For the Duration and Beyond: World War II and the Creation of Modern Houston, Texas." Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 1999.

Lewis, David Levering. *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1919-1963: The Fight for Equality and the American Century*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2000.

Lewis, Valerie A., Michael O. Emerson, and Stephen L. Klineberg. "Who We'll Live With: Neighborhood Racial Composition Preferences of Whites, Blacks and Latinos." *Social Forces* 89, no. 4 (June 1, 2011): 1385–1407.

Lin, Jan. *The Power of Urban Ethnic Places: Cultural Heritage and Community Life*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Lippman, Matthew. *Criminal Procedure*. Los Angeles: SAGE, 2013.

Lipsitz, George. *How Racism Takes Place*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.

———. *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: How White People Profit from Identity Politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2006.

Logan, Rayford Whittingham. *The Negro in American Life and Thought: The Nadir, 1877-1901*. New York: Dial Press, 1954.

Long, Michael G. *Marshalling Justice: The Early Civil Rights Letters of Thurgood Marshall*. New York: Amistad, 2011.

Longoria, Rafael, and Susan Rogers. "The Rurban Horseshoe." *Cite: The Architecture + Design Review of Houston*, 2007.

- Loon, Benjamin van. "On the Boards: Emancipation Park." *Green Building and Design*, June 2014. <http://gbdmagazine.com/2014/27-freelon-group/>.
- López, Ian F. Haney. "'A Nation of Minorities': Race, Ethnicity, and Reactionary Colorblindness." *Stanford Law Review* 59, no. 4 (February 1, 2007): 985–1063.
- Lopez, Ian Haney. *Dog Whistle Politics: How Coded Racial Appeals Have Reinvented Racism and Wrecked the Middle Class*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Lorber, Judith. *Gender Inequality: Feminist Theories and Politics*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- "Luther Collins Case." *The Crisis* 29, no. 2 (December 1924): 71.
- Mahaffey v. Official Detective Stories, Inc., 210 F. Supp. 251 (U.S. District Court for the Western District of Louisiana 1962).
- M. K. T. Ry. Co. v. Magee, 32 Tex. 616 (Supreme Court of Texas 1899).
- Mallicoat, Stacy L., and Connie Estrada Ireland. *Women and Crime: The Essentials*. Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2013.
- Malone, Cheryl Knott. "Autonomy and Accommodation: Houston's Colored Carnegie Library, 1907-1922." *Libraries & Culture* 34, no. 2 (1999): 95–112.
- . "Unannounced and Unexpected: The Desegregation of Houston Public Library in the Early 1950s." *Library Trends* 55, no. 3 (2007): 665–74. doi:10.1353/lib.2007.0015.
- Mandle, Jay R. *The Roots of Black Poverty: The Southern Plantation Economy after the Civil War*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1978.
- Mann, Michael. "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results." *European Journal of Sociology* 25, no. 2 (1984): 185–213.
- Marable, Manning. *Race, Reform, and Rebellion: The Second Reconstruction and Beyond in Black America, 1945-2006*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007.
- Marchiafava, Louis J. "The Houston Police, 1878-1948." *Rice University Studies* 63, no. 2 (Spring 1977): 1–119.
- Marks, John Garrison. "Community Bonds in the Bayou City: Free Blacks and Local Reputation in Early Houston." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 117, no. 3 (2014): 266–82. doi:10.1353/swh.2014.0022.
- Marshall, Thurgood, and Mark V. Tushnet. *Thurgood Marshall: His Speeches, Writings, Arguments, Opinions, and Reminiscences*. Chicago: Lawrence Hill Books, 2001.

- Massing, Michael. *The Fix*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Mays, Fayrene Neuman. "A History of Public Library Service to Negroes in Houston, Texas, 1907-1962." M.A. thesis, Atlanta University, 1964.
- McCandless, Amy Thompson. *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1999.
- McComb, David G. *The City in Texas: A History*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015.
- McCord, William, John Howard, Bernard Friedberg, and Edwin Harwood. *Life Styles in the Black Ghetto*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1969.
- McCormick, Kate, and Kris Holt. *Southside Place*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2014.
- McCoy, Cory. "Texas vs. NAACP Records Found." *TylerPaper.com*, June 21, 2015. <http://www.tylerpaper.com/TP-News+Local/221070/texas-vs-naacp-records-found>.
- McGuire, Danielle. "'It Was Like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle." In *Other Souths: Diversity and Difference in the U.S. South, Reconstruction to Present*, edited by Pippa Holloway, 298–327. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008.
- McGuire, Danielle L. *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance- a New History of the Civil Rights Movement from Rosa Parks to the Rise of Black Power*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2010.
- McGuire, Danielle L. "'It Was like All of Us Had Been Raped': Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle." *Journal of American History* 91, no. 3 (December 1, 2004): 906–31. doi:10.2307/3662860.
- McKinney, Tom Watson. "Superhighway Deluxe: Houston's Gulf Freeway." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Houston, 2006.
- McLaughlin, Malcolm. *The Long, Hot Summer of 1967: Urban Rebellion in America*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- McNair, Glenn. "Slave Women, Capital Crime, and Criminal Justice in Georgia." *Georgia Historical Quarterly* 93, no. 2 (July 1, 2009): 135–58.
- McNeil, Genna Rae. *Groundwork: Charles Hamilton Houston and the Struggle for Civil Rights*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011.
- McVeigh, Rory. "Structured Ignorance and Organized Racism in the United States." *Social Forces* 82, no. 3 (March 1, 2004): 895–936.

- Meeker, Martin. "The Queerly Disadvantaged and the Making of San Francisco's War on Poverty, 1964–1967." *Pacific Historical Review* 81, no. 1 (2012): 21–59. doi:10.1525/phr.2012.81.1.21.
- Meeks, Tomiko. "Freedmen's Town, Texas: A Lesson in the Failure of Historic Preservation." *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (2011): 42–44.
- . "We've Come This Far by Faith." *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 3 (2011): 30–32.
- Meier, August, and Elliot Rudwick. "A Strange Chapter in the Career of 'Jim Crow.'" In *The Black Community in Modern America*, edited by August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, 2:14–19. New York: Antheneum, 1969.
- Melosi, Martin V., and Joseph A. Pratt. *Energy Metropolis: An Environmental History of Houston and the Gulf Coast*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2014.
- Men of Affairs of Houston and Environs: A Newspaper Reference Work*. Houston: W. H. Coyle and Company, 1913. <http://archive.org/details/menofaffairsofho00hou>.
- Merseburger, Marion. "A Political History of Houston, Texas, During the Reconstruction Period as Recorded by the Press: 1868-1873." M.A. thesis, Rice Institute, 1950.
- Messner, Michael A. "When Bodies Are Weapons: Masculinity and Violence in Sport." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 25, no. 3 (September 1, 1990): 203–20. doi:10.1177/101269029002500303.
- Meyer, Stephen. *As Long As They Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1999.
- Meyerowitz, Joanne. *How Sex Changed: A History of Transsexuality in the United States*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.
- Miguel, Guadalupe San. *Chicana/o Struggles for Education: Activism in the Community*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.
- Mill, John Stuart. "Utilitarianism." *Utilitarianism: Past, Present and Future*, n.d. <http://www.utilitarianism.com/mill1.htm>.
- Miller, James A. *Remembering Scottsboro: The Legacy of an Infamous Trial*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.
- Miller, James A., Susan D. Pennybacker, and Eve Rosenhaft. "Mother Ada Wright and the International Campaign to Free the Scottsboro Boys, 1931-1934." *American Historical Review* 106, no. 2 (2001): 387–430. doi:10.2307/2651612.

- Minton, John. "Houston Creoles and Zydeco: The Emergence of an African American Urban Popular Style." In *Ramblin' on My Mind: New Perspectives on the Blues*, edited by David Evans. University of Illinois Press, 2008.
- Mock, Janet. *Redefining Realness: My Path to Womanhood, Identity, Love & So Much More*. New York: Atria Books, 2014.
- Mohl, Raymond A. "'South of the South?' Jews, Blacks, and the Civil Rights Movement in Miami, 1945-1960." *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 2 (Winter 1999): 3-36.
- Montz, Zachary. "The Battle for San Felipe: The Promise and Perils of Public Housing in Houston." Rice University, Houston, Texas, 2013.
- Moore v. Dempsey, 261 U.S. 86 (Supreme Court of the United States 1923).
- Morris, Aldon D. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1986.
- Morris v. State, 39 Tex.Cr. R. 371, No. 46 S.W. 253 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas June 27, 1953).
- Morrison & Fourmy Directory Co. *Houston City Directory 1919*. Houston: R. L. Polk & Co., n.d.
- Moten, Fred. "Uplift and Criminality." In *Next to the Color Line: Gender, Sexuality, and W.E.B. Du Bois*, edited by Susan Kay Gillman and Alys Eve Weinbaum, 317-49. Critical American Studies Series. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007.
- Mouton, Virgie Lemond. "And So He Rose Alone: The Legacy of Judge Henry Eman Doyle, the First Graduate of Texas Southern University School of Law, Presently Known as Texas Southern University Thurgood Marshall School of Law." presented at the The Texas State Historical Association 112th Annual Meeting, Corpus Christi, Texas, March 7, 2008.
- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick. "The Negro Family: The Case for National Action." U.S. Department of Labor – History – *The Negro Family - The Case for National Action*, March 1965. <http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/history/webid-meynihan.htm>.
- Muhammad, Khalil Gibran. *The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime, and the Making of Modern Urban America*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010.
- Mumford, Kevin J. *Interzones: Black/White Sex Districts in Chicago and New York in the Early Twentieth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
- Murphy, Walter F. "The South Counterattacks: The Anti-NAACP Laws." *Western Political Quarterly* 12, no. 2 (June 1959): 371-90.

- Murray, Hugh T., Jr. "The NAACP versus the Communist Party: The Scottsboro Rape Cases, 1931-1932." *Phylon* 28, no. 3 (September 1, 1967): 276-87. doi:10.2307/273666.
- Mutua, Athena D. *Progressive Black Masculinities?* New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Myrdal, Gunnar. *An American Dilemma*. Vol. 2: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1964.
- Nabrit, S. M. "Desegregation and the Future of Graduate and Professional Education in Negro Institutions." *Journal of Negro Education* 27, no. 3 (1958): 414-18. doi:10.2307/2293776.
- Namaste, Viviane. "Undoing Theory: The 'Transgender Question' and the Epistemic Violence of Anglo-American Feminist Theory." *Hypatia* 24, no. 3 (July 1, 2009): 11-32.
- National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. *Thirty Years of Lynching in the United States, 1889-1918*. National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 1919.
- "National Prison Rape Elimination Commission Report." *Federal Sentencing Reporter* 24, no. 1 (October 1, 2011): 44-45. doi:10.1525/fsr.2011.24.1.44.
- Neal, Mark Anthony. *Looking for Leroy: Illegible Black Masculinities*. New York: New York University Press, 2013.
- "Need Opinion on Midtown / 4th Ward Subdivision." *City-Data.com*, n.d. <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1116407-need-opinion-midtown-4th-ward-subdivision.html#b>.
- Nevels, Cynthia Skove. *Lynching to Belong: Claiming Whiteness through Racial Violence*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2007.
- "New Houston Nitery Bows." *Billboard*, January 14, 1978.
- Newman, Richard S. "Prelude to the Gag Rule: Southern Reaction to Antislavery Petitions in the First Federal Congress." *Journal of the Early Republic* 16, no. 4 (December 1, 1996): 571-99. doi:10.2307/3124418.
- Nixon, Rob. *Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011.
- Norris v. Alabama, 294 U.S. 587 (Supreme Court of the United States 1935).

- Novkov, Julie. "Mobilizing Liberalism in Defense of Racism." *Good Society* 16, no. 1 (2007): 30–39. doi:10.1353/gso.0.0003.
- Obadele-Starks, Ernest. "Black Labor, the Black Middle Class, and Organized Protest along the Upper Texas Gulf Coast, 1883-1945." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 103, no. 1 (1999): 52–65.
- O'Brien, Gail Williams. *The Color of the Law: Race, Violence, and Justice in the Post-World War II South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Oliver, Mary Beth. "African American Men as 'Criminal and Dangerous': Implications of Media Portrayals of Crime on the 'Criminalization' of African American Men." *Journal of African American Studies* 7, no. 2 (2003): 3–18.
- Olsen, Margaret Nunnelley. "One Nation, One World: American Clubwomen and the Politics of Internationalism, 1945–1961." Ph.D. dissertation, Rice University, 2008.
- Omi, Michael, and Howard Winant. *Racial Formation in the United States: From the 1960s to the 1990s*. New York: Routledge, 1994.
- "Our History." Mt Vernon United Methodist Church - Houston, TX *The People's Church Since 1865*, n.d. <http://www.mtvernonhou.org/>.
- Pando, Patricia. "In the Nickel, Houston's Fifth Ward." *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 3 (2011): 33–37.
- . "Two Worlds a Mile Apart: A Brief History of the Fourth Ward." *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (2011): 37–41.
- Parker, Lynette. "Theorizing the Ghetto: The Intersection of Resources, Psychology, and Oppression in the Construction of Black Identity and Consciousness." Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 2013.
- Pascoe, Peggy. *What Comes Naturally: Miscegenation Law and the Making of Race in America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Passey, Mary Louise. "Freedmantown: The Evolution of a Black Neighborhood in Houston, 1865-1880." M.A. thesis, Rice University, 1993.
- Patterson, Haywood, and Earl Conrad. *Scottsboro Boy*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1950.
- Patton, Tracey Owens, and Julie Snyder-Yuly. "Any Four Black Men Will Do: Rape, Race, and the Ultimate Scapegoat." *Journal of Black Studies* 37, no. 6 (July 1, 2007): 859–95.

- Paulsen, Derek J. "Murder in Black and White: An Exploratory Analysis of the Newspaper Coverage of Homicide in Houston, 1986-1994." Ph.D. dissertation, Sam Houston State University, 2000.
- Peirce, Neal R. *The Great Plains States of America: People, Politics, and Power in the Nine Great Plains States*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1973.
- Perkinson, Robert. *Texas Tough: The Rise of America's Prison Empire*. New York: Metropolitan Books, 2010.
- Perry, Nancy, Spencer Crew, and Nigel M. Waters. "'We Didn't Have Any Other Place to Live': Residential Patterns in Segregated Arlington County, Virginia." *Southeastern Geographer* 53, no. 4 (December 7, 2013): 403–27. doi:10.1353/sgo.2013.0031.
- Perry, Pettis. "Certain Prime Aspects of the Negro Question." *Political Affairs* 30 (October 10, 1951): 6–22.
- Peters, William. "Houston's Quiet Victory." *Good Housekeeping*, October 1959.
- Phelps, Wesley G. *A People's War on Poverty: Urban Politics and Grassroots Activists in Houston*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014.
- Pitre, Merline. "Black Houstonians and the 'Separate but Equal' Doctrine: Carter Wesley versus Lulu B. White." In *The African American Experience in Texas: An Anthology*, edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and James Smallwood, 302–17. Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 2007.
- . *In Struggle against Jim Crow: Lulu B. White and the NAACP, 1900-1957*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2010.
- Plath, Lydia, and Sergio Lussana, eds. *Black and White Masculinity in the American South, 1800-2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
- Pokorny, Alex D. "A Comparison of Homicides in Two Cities." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology* 56, no. 4 (December 1965): 479–87.
- Police Brutality: Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1991.
- Ponton, David. "Clothed in Blue Flesh: Police Brutality and the Disciplining of Race, Gender, and the 'Human.'" *Theory & Event* 19, no. 3 (2016). <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/623994>.
- Ponton, III, David. "Disentangling Desire in 1950s Houston: On Assemblages and Racial Disparity in American Criminal Justice," December 10, 2013. <https://scholarship.rice.edu/handle/1911/75930>.

- Posner, Richard A. *Law, Pragmatism, and Democracy*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005.
- Potter, Hillary. *Battle Cries: Black Women and Intimate Partner Abuse*. New York: NYU Press, 2008.
- Prather, Patricia Smith. *In Search of Old Colored High*, n.d.
- . “Smith, Ernest Ollington.” *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 15, 2010.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsm83>.
- Pratt, Joseph. “8F and Many More: Business and Civic Leadership in Modern Houston.” *Houston History Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 2–7, 31–39.
- Prestage, Jewel L., and Franklin D. Jones. “Contemporary Black Texas Women: Political and Educational Leadership, 1974-2000.” In *Black Women in Texas History*, edited by Bruce A. Glasrud and Merline Pitre, 194–220. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008.
- “Projected Work.” *Engineering-Contracting* 32, no. 1 (July 7, 1909): 33.
- Pruitt, Bernadette. “For the Advancement of the Race: African-American Migration and Community Building in Houston, 1914-1945.” Ph.D., University of Houston, 2001.
- . *The Other Great Migration: The Movement of Rural African Americans to Houston, 1900-1941*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2013.
- Quadagno, Jill S. *The Color of Welfare: How Racism Undermined the War on Poverty*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Quillian, Lincoln, and Devah Pager. “Black Neighbors, Higher Crime? The Role of Racial Stereotypes in Evaluations of Neighborhood Crime.” *American Journal of Sociology* 107, no. 3 (2001): 717–67. doi:10.1086/338938.
- Rabinowitz, Howard N. “From Exclusion to Segregation: Southern Race Relations, 1865-1890.” *Journal of American History* 63, no. 2 (1976): 325–50. doi:10.2307/1899640.
- “Relief Workers Confront ‘Urban Warfare,’” September 1, 2005.
<http://www.cnn.com/2005/WEATHER/09/01/katrina.impact/>.
- Renzull, Linda A., and Lorraine Evans. “School Choice, Charter Schools, and White Flight.” *Social Problems* 52, no. 3 (2005): 398–418. doi:10.1525/sp.2005.52.3.398.
- Report of the City Planning Commission, Houston, Texas*. Houston: The Forum of Civics, 1929.
<https://www.hathitrust.org/>.

- Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1968.
- “Rev. Lee Haywood Simpson: An Inventory of His Records at the Houston Metropolitan Research Center, Houston Public Library,” n.d.
<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/taro/houpub/00011/hpub-00011.html>.
- Reynolds, William Bradford. “Individualism vs. Group Rights: The Legacy of Brown.” *The Yale Law Journal* 93, no. 6 (May 1, 1984): 995–1005. doi:10.2307/796202.
- Richardson, C. F. “Houston’s Colored Citizens: Activities and Conditions among the Negro Population.” In *Civics for Houston*, 1:5, 14, 29–30, 1929.
- Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 1)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967.
- Riots, Civil and Criminal Disorders: Hearings before the Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations United States Senate Ninetieth Congress, First Session (Part 3)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1967.
- Rise, Eric W. *The Martinsville Seven: Race, Rape, and Capital Punishment*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1998.
- Ritterhouse, Jennifer Lynn. *Growing Up Jim Crow: How Black and White Southern Children Learned Race*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006.
- Roberts, Robert E., and Cornelius Askew, Jr. “A Consideration of Mortality in Three Subcultures.” *Health Services Report* 87, no. 3 (March 1972): 262–70.
- Roberts, Samuel. *Infectious Fear: Politics, Disease, and the Health Effects of Segregation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009.
- Robertson, Robert J. *Fair Ways: How Six Black Golfers Won Civil Rights in Beaumont, Texas*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2015.
- Robinson, II, Charles F. “Legislated Love in the Lone Star State: Texas and Miscegenation.” *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 108, no. 1 (July 1, 2004): 65–87.
- Rodrigue, John C. “Black Agency After Slavery.” In *Reconstructions: New Perspectives on Postbellum America*, edited by Thomas J. Brown, 40–65. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Rogers, Mary Beth. *Barbara Jordan: American Hero*. New York: Bantam, 2000.

- Ross, Benjamin. *Dead End: Suburban Sprawl and the Rebirth of American Urbanism*. Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Roth, Mitchel P., and Tom Kennedy. *Houston Blue: The Story of the Houston Police Department*. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2012.
- Rubio, Philip F. *There's Always Work at the Post Office: African American Postal Workers and the Fight for Jobs, Justice, and Equality*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Rudwick, Elliott M. *Race Riot at East St. Louis, July 2, 1917*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964.
- Russell, Thomas D. "Keep Negroes out of Most Classes Where There Are a Large Number of Girls': The Unseen Power of the Ku Klux Klan and Standardized Testing at the University of Texas, 1899-1999." In *Law, Society, and History: Themes in the Legal Sociology and Legal History of Lawrence M. Friedman*, edited by Robert W. Gordon and Morton J. Horwitz, 309–36. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
- Salem, James M. *The Late, Great Johnny Ace and the Transition from R & B to Rock "N" Roll*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001.
- San Miguel, Guadalupe. *Brown, Not White: School Integration and the Chicano Movement in Houston*. College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2001.
- Sanders, Melissa A. "Equal Protection, Class Legislation, and Colorblindness." *Michigan Law Review* 96 (November 1997): 245–337.
- Sandoval-Strausz, A. K. "Travelers, Strangers, and Jim Crow: Law, Public Accommodations, and Civil Rights in America." *Law and History Review* 23, no. 1 (April 1, 2005): 53–94.
- Saporito, Salvatore, and Annette Lareau. "School Selection as a Process: The Multiple Dimensions of Race in Framing Educational Choice." *Social Problems* 46, no. 3 (August 1, 1999): 418–39. doi:10.2307/3097108.
- Sapper, Neil Gary. "A Survey of the History of the Black People of Texas, 1930-1954." Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1972.
- Sartain, Lee. *Borders of Equality: The NAACP and the Baltimore Civil Rights Struggle, 1914-1970*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2013.
- Savitch, H. V., and John Clayton Thomas. *Big City Politics in Transition*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 1991.

- Schilt, Kristen, and Laurel Westbrook. "Doing Gender, Doing Heteronormativity: 'Gender Normals,' Transgender People, and the Social Maintenance of Heterosexuality." *Gender and Society* 23, no. 4 (2009): 440–64.
- Schippers, Mimi. "Recovering the Feminine Other: Masculinity, Femininity, and Gender Hegemony." *Theory and Society* 36, no. 1 (February 1, 2007): 85–102.
- Schoen, Harold. "The Free Negro in the Republic of Texas, IV." *Southwestern Historical Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (1937): 169–99.
- Schuler, Edgar A. "The Houston Race Riot, 1917." *Journal of Negro History* 29, no. 3 (July 1, 1944): 300–338. doi:10.2307/2714820.
- Schwartz, Jon. *This Is Our Home It Is Not for Sale*. Houston: Riverside Productions, 2007.
- Scott, Daryl Michael. *Contempt and Pity: Social Policy and the Image of the Damaged Black Psyche, 1880-1996*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.
- Self, Robert O. *American Babylon: Race and the Struggle for Postwar Oakland*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.
- Sewell, William H. "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation." *American Journal of Sociology* 98, no. 1 (July 1, 1992): 1–29.
- Shabazz, Amilcar. *Advancing Democracy: African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equity in Higher Education in Texas*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.
- . "Carter Wesley and the Making of Houston's Civic Culture before the Second Reconstruction." *Houston History Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 8–13.
- Shafer, Dave. "Looking Back Wards." *City Savvy* 13, no. 1 (2008).
http://www.houstontx.gov/savvy/archives/win08/win08_heritage.htm.
- Shapiro, Herbert. *White Violence and Black Response: From Reconstruction to Montgomery*. Cambridge: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988.
- Sharpless, Rebecca. *Cooking in Other Women's Kitchens: Domestic Workers in the South, 1865-1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010.
- Sheeler, J. Rueben. "The Nabrit Family." *Negro History Bulletin*, February 14, 1958. Box 1, folder 6, Dr. John Rueben Sheeler Collection MSS 268. HMRC, HPL.
- . "[Untitled Lecture]," June 21, 1961. Box 4, folder 9, The J. Reuben Sheeler Collection. MSS 268. HMRC, HPL.

- Shelton, Jason E., and M. Nicole Coleman. "After the Storm: How Race, Class, and Immigration Concerns Influenced Beliefs About the Katrina Evacuees." *Social Science Quarterly* 90, no. 3 (2009): 480–96.
- Shepherd, George W., and David Penna. *Racism and the Underclass: State Policy and Discrimination against Minorities*. New York: Greenwood Press, 1991.
- Shepherd, John Ben. Brief in Opposition, 345 U.S. 951 (n.d.).
- Shull, Steven A. *A Kinder, Gentler Racism?: The Reagan-Bush Civil Rights Legacy*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993.
- Siegel, Frederick F. *The Future Once Happened Here: New York, D.C., L.A., and the Fate of America's Big Cities*. New York: Free Press, 1997.
- Siegel, Reva B. "Discrimination in the Eyes of the Law: How 'Color Blindness' Discourse Disrupts and Rationalizes Social Stratification." *California Law Review* 88, no. 1 (January 1, 2000): 77–118. doi:10.2307/3481275.
- Silver, Christopher. *The Separate City: Black Communities in the Urban South, 1940-1968*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995.
- Simpson, George E. *The Negro in the Philadelphia Press*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1936.
- Singer, Simon I. "The Fear of Reprisal and the Failure of Victims to Report a Personal Crime." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 4, no. 3 (1988): 289–302.
- "Single Black Woman Moving to Houston in 2014." *City-Data.com*. Accessed February 10, 2017. <http://www.city-data.com/forum/houston/1918235-single-black-woman-moving-houston-2014-a.html>.
- "Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940 (Enumeration District: 101-22A, Page 21A)." Harris County, Texas, 1940. Publication No. T627_4054. National Archives and Records Administration. <http://heritagequestonline.com>.
- Sjoquist, David L. "The Atlanta Paradox: Introduction." In *The Atlanta Paradox*, edited by David L. Sjoquist, 1–14. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000.
- Skolnick, Jerome H., and David H. Bayley. *The New Blue Line: Police Innovation in Six American Cities*. Simon and Schuster, 1988.
- Slonecker, Blake. *A New Dawn for the New Left: Liberation News Service, Montague Farm, and the Long Sixties*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012.
- Slotboom, Erik. *Houston Freeways: A Historical and Visual Journey*. O.F. Slotboom, 2003.

- Slutsky, Beth. *Gendering Radicalism: Women and Communism in Twentieth-Century California*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015.
- Smith, Douglas A. "The Neighborhood Context of Police Behavior." *Crime and Justice* 8 (1986): 313–41.
- Smith, Tabathia. "Blue Terror on Black America." *Umoja Sasa* 6, no. 1 (1979): 4–8.
- Smith v. Texas, 311 U.S. 128 (Supreme Court of the United States 1940).
- Smithers, Gregory D. *Slave Breeding: Sex, Violence, and Memory in African American History*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012.
- Soifer, Hillel. "State Infrastructural Power: Approaches to Conceptualization and Measurement." *Studies in Comparative International Development* 43, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2008): 231. doi:10.1007/s12116-008-9028-6.
- Sokol, Jason. *There Goes My Everything: White Southerners in the Age of Civil Rights, 1945-1975*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2008.
- SoRelle, James Martin. "The Darker Side of 'Heaven': The Black Community in Houston, Texas, 1917-1945." Ph.D. dissertation, Kent State University, 1980.
- Spearman, DeCarlous. "Henry Elman Doyle." In *African American National Biography*, edited by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. and Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- "Special Venire in Capital Cases." *Texas Code of Criminal Procedure* Title 1, no. Chapter 34 (December 1, 1966).
- Spirer, Jess. *Negro Crime*. Edited by Roy M. Dorcus. Vol. Comparative Psychology Monographs, 16 no. 2. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1940.
- Staiger, Annegret. "Whiteness as Giftedness: Racial Formation at an Urban High School." *Social Problems* 51, no. 2 (May 1, 2004): 161–81. doi:10.1525/sp.2004.51.2.161.
- Stanfield II, John H. *Historical Foundations of Black Reflective Sociology*. New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Stark, Evan. "Race, Gender, and Woman Battering." In *Violent Crime: Assessing Race and Ethnic Differences*, edited by Darnell F. Hawkins, 171–97. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1999*. 119th ed. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Census Bureau, 1999.
<https://www.census.gov/library/publications/1999/compendia/statab/119ed.html>.

- Steele, Claude M. *Whistling Vivaldi: How Stereotypes Affect Us and What We Can Do*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2011.
- Step toe, Tyina. *Houston Bound: Culture and Color in a Jim Crow City*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2015.
- Step toe, Tyina Leaneice. "Dixie West: Race, Migration, and the Color Lines in Jim Crow Houston." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin - Madison, 2008.
- Straus, Emily E. *Death of a Suburban Dream: Race and Schools in Compton, California*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014.
- Stringer, Tommy. "Joseph Stephen Cullinan: Pioneer in Texas Oil." *East Texas Historical Journal* 19, no. 2 (1981): 43–59.
- Strom, Steven R. *Houston Lost and Unbuilt*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010.
- Study and Investigation of Housing: Hearings before the Joint Committee on Housing Eightieth Congress, First Session*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1948.
- Sugrue, Thomas J. "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940-1964." *Journal of American History* 82, no. 2 (September 1, 1995): 551–78. doi:10.2307/2082186.
- "Super Neighborhood 71 - Sunnyside." *City of Houston eGovernment Center*. Accessed May 12, 2016. <http://www.houstontx.gov/superneighborhoods/71.html>.
- Suttles, Gerald D. *The Social Order of the Slum: Ethnicity and Territory in the Inner City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968.
- Suval, John. "Mixing It Up." *Houston Press*, May 10, 2001. <http://www.houstonpress.com/news/mixing-it-up-6562324>.
- Sweatt v. Painter, 339 U.S. 629 (Supreme Court of the United States 1950).
- Thacher, David. "Conflicting Values in Community Policing." *Law & Society Review* 35, no. 4 (2001): 765–98. doi:10.2307/3185416.
- The Red Book of Houston: A Compendium of Social, Professional, Religious, Educational and Industrial Interests of Houston's Colored Population*. Houston: Sotex Publishing Company, 1915. <http://archive.org/details/redbookofhouston00sote>.
- "The U.S. Negro, 1953." *Time*, May 11, 1953.
- Thompson, Carlyle Van. *The Tragic Black Buck: Racial Masquerading in the American Literary Imagination*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004.

- Thompson, Heather Ann. "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History." *Journal of American History* 97, no. 3 (December 1, 2010): 703–34. doi:10.1093/jahist/97.3.703.
- Thompson, Mark A. "Black-White Residential Segregation in Atlanta." In *The Atlanta Paradox*, edited by David L. Sjoquist, 88–115. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2000.
- Tinsley, James A. "Fleming, Lamar Jr." *Handbook of Texas Online*. Published by the Texas State Historical Association, June 12, 2010.
<https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ffl09>.
- "To Bear Fruit For Our Race: History of Houston's African-American Physicians." *Department of History at the University of Houston*. Accessed May 5, 2016.
http://www.history.uh.edu/cph/tobearfruit/story_1900-1926_section08.html.
- Tollett, Kenneth S. "Southern Justice for Blacks." *Ebony*, October 1971.
- Toro, Luis Angel. "A People Distinct from Others: Race and Identity in Federal Indian Law and the Hispanic Classifications in OMB Directive No. 15." *Texas Tech Law Review* 26 (1995): 1219.
- Truman, Jennifer L., and Lynn Langton. "Criminal Victimization, 2013." Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, September 19, 2014.
<http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cv13.pdf>.
- Tsanoff, Corrinne Stephenson. *Neighborhood Doorways: Neighborhood Centers Association of Houston and Harris County*. Houston: Neighborhood Centers Association of Houston and Harris County, 1958.
- Turley, David. *American Religion: Literary Sources and Documents*. Mountfield, U.K.: Helm Information Ltd, 1998.
- Tushnet, Mark V. *Making Civil Rights Law: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court, 1936-1961*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.
- Tuttle, William M. *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919*. New York: Atheneum, 1970.
- Tyson, Timothy B. *Radio Free Dixie: Robert F. Williams and the Roots of Black Power*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
- Uhlman, James Todd. "Geographies of Desire: Bayard Taylor and the Romance of Travel in Bourgeois American Culture 1820-1880." Ph.D. dissertation, Rutgers University, 2007.
- Van Dyke, Martin. "Masquerade." *Official Detective Stories*, April 1960.

- Varano, Sean P., Joseph A. Schafer, Jeffrey M. Cancino, Scott H. Decker, and Jack R. Greene. "A Tale of Three Cities: Crime and Displacement after Hurricane Katrina." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 38, no. 1 (January 2010): 42–50. doi:10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2009.11.006.
- Verniaud, Marshall. *Southampton: A Mini-History of the First 50 Years*. Houston: The Southampton Civic Club, 1975.
- "Victim Characteristics." *Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)*, n.d. http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=92#data_collections.
- Visher, Christy A. "Gender, Police Arrest Decisions, and Notions of Chivalry." *Criminology* 21, no. 1 (February 1, 1983): 5–28. doi:10.1111/j.1745-9125.1983.tb00248.x.
- Voich, Dan, and Lee P. Stepina. *Cross-Cultural Analysis of Values and Political Economy Issues*. Greenwood Publishing Group, 1994.
- Voogd, Jan. *Race Riots & Resistance: The Red Summer of 1919*. New York: Peter Lang, 2008.
- Wade, Richard C. *Slavery in the Cities: The South 1820-1860*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1967.
- Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Prose*. 1st ed. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983.
- Walker, Brandon. "Brick Removal Causing a Stir in Houston's Fourth Ward." *KPRC*, December 8, 2016. <http://www.click2houston.com/news/brick-removal-causing-a-stir-in-houstons-fourth-ward>.
- Wallach, Jennifer Jensen, and John A. Kirk, eds. *Arsnick: The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Arkansas*. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 2012.
- Walsh, Robb. "The Barbecue Ward." *Houston Press*, June 13, 2002. <http://www.houstonpress.com/restaurants/the-barbecue-ward-6593515>.
- Ward, Roger Townsend. "Acres Homes Transit Company." *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, December 17, 2015. <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/dgama>.
- Warner, W. Lloyd. "American Class and Caste." *American Journal of Sociology* 42, no. 2 (1936): 234–37.
- Watkins, William H. *The White Architects of Black Education: Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954*. 50192nd edition. New York: Teachers College Press, 2001.

- Watson, Dwight. "In the Name of Decency and Progress: The Response of Houston's Civic Leaders to the Lynching of Robert Powell in 1928." *The Houston Review* 1, no. 2 (2004): 26–30.
- . *Race and the Houston Police Department, 1930–1990: A Change Did Come*. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2005.
- Wayman, Richard A. Hooks. "Homeless Queer Youth: National Perspectives on Research, Best Practices, and Evidence-Based Interventions." *Seattle Journal for Social Justice* 7, no. 2 (2009): 587–634.
- Weber, Bruce J., and Charles Orson Cook. "Will Hogg and Civic Consciousness: Houston Style." *The Houston Review: History and Culture of the Gulf Coast* 11, no. 1 (1980): 21–38.
- Weheliye, Alexander G. *Habeas Viscus: Racializing Assemblages, Biopolitics, and Black Feminist Theories of the Human*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014.
- Weinberg, Arthur, and Lila Shaffer Weinberg. *Clarence Darrow, a Sentimental Rebel*. New York: Atheneum, 1987.
- Weitzer, Ronald. "Racialized Policing: Residents' Perceptions in Three Neighborhoods." *Law & Society Review* 34, no. 1 (2000): 129–55. doi:10.2307/3115118.
- Welch, Matt. "They Shoot Helicopters, Don't They?" *Reason.com*, December 1, 2005. <http://reason.com/archives/2005/12/01/they-shoot-helicopters-dont-th>.
- Welke, Barbara F. "When All Women Were White, and All the Blacks Were Men: Gender, Class, Race and the Road to Plessy, 1855-1914." In *When Did Southern Segregation Begin?*, edited by John David Smith, 1st ed., 133–52. New York; Basingstoke: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.
- Wells, Amy Stuart. *Both Sides Now: The Story of School Desegregation's Graduates*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.
- Western, Bruce, and Christopher Wildeman. "The Black Family and Mass Incarceration." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 621 (January 1, 2009): 221–42.
- White, Susan O. "A Perspective on Police Professionalization." *Law & Society Review* 7, no. 1 (1972): 61–85. doi:10.2307/3052829.
- White v. State, 139 Tex. Crim. 660 (Court of Criminal Appeals of Texas 1940).

- Whitsitt, Carolyn Elizabeth. "Caught in the Crossfire: Public Housing and Race in Houston." M.A. Thesis, Stephen F. Austin State University, 2011.
<http://gradworks.umi.com/15/04/1504181.html>.
- Wiese, Andrew. *Places of Their Own: African American Suburbanization in the Twentieth Century*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Wild, Mark. *Street Meeting: Multiethnic Neighborhoods in Early Twentieth-Century Los Angeles*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
- Williams, David A. *Bricks without Straw: A Comprehensive History of African Americans in Texas*. Austin: Eakin Press, 1997.
- Williams, George Washington. *History of the Negro Race in America from 1619 to 1880: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens; Together with a Preliminary Consideration of the Unity of the Human Family, an Historical Sketch of Africa, and an Account of the Negro Governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia*. G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1882.
- Williams, Heather Andrea. *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Williams, James D., ed. *The State of Black America: 1984*. Transaction Publishers, 1983.
- Williams, Robert F. *Negroes with Guns*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1998.
- Williams, Shawna D. "Robinson Judson Wilbur, Jr." *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, May 24, 2013.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/frobu>.
- . "Robinson Judson Wilbur, Sr." *The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*, June 17, 2013.
<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/froco>.
- Williamson, Joel. *A Rage for Order: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation: Black-White Relations in the American South Since Emancipation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986.
- . "The Separation of the Races." In *When Did Southern Segregation Begin?*, edited by John David Smith, 1st ed., 59–84. New York; Basingstoke: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2001.
- Wilson, Ezell. "Third Ward, Steeped in Tradition of Self-Reliance and Achievement." *Houston History Magazine* 8, no. 2 (Spring 2011): 31–35.
- Wilson, James Q., and Richard J. Herrnstein. *Crime and Human Nature: The Definitive Study of the Causes of Crime*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998.

- Wilson, William Julius. *The Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass, and Public Policy*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012.
- Winant, Howard. "Behind Blue Eyes: Whiteness and Contemporary U.S. Racial Politics." In *Off White: Readings on Power, Privilege, and Resistance*, edited by Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Linda Powell Pruitt, and April Burns, 2nd ed., 3–16. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Winegarten, Ruthe. *Black Texas Women: 150 Years of Trial and Triumph*. University of Texas Press, 2010.
- Wintz, Cary D. *Blacks in Houston*. Houston: Houston Center for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Humanities, 1982.
- . "Fourth Ward, Houston." *The Handbook of Texas. The Handbook of Texas Online | Texas State Historical Association (TSHA)*. Accessed May 5, 2016. <https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/hpf01>.
- . "'The Struggle for Dignity': African Americans in Twentieth Century Texas." In *Twentieth-Century Texas: A Social and Cultural History*, edited by John W. Storey and Mary L. Scheer, 69–104. Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2008.
- Wolters, Raymond. *The New Negro on Campus: Black College Rebellions of the 1920s*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975.
- Wood, Roger, and James Fraher. *Down in Houston: Bayou City Blues*. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.
- Woods, Jeff. *Black Struggle, Red Scare: Segregation and Anti-Communism in the South, 1948-1968*. Louisiana State University Press, 2004.
- Woodward, C. Vann. *Origins of the New South, 1877-1913: A History of the South*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981.
- . *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1955.
- . *Thinking Back: The Perils of Writing History*. Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1987.
- Wright, Harry K. *Civil Rights U.S.A., Public Schools, Southern States, 1963, Texas: Staff Report*. The Commission, 1964.
- Young, Iris Marion. *Intersecting Voices*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.
- Young, James D. *Socialism Since 1889: A Biographical History*. London: Pinter, 1988.

Zeigler, Robert E. "The Working Man in Houston, Texas, 1865-1915." Ph.D. dissertation, Texas Tech University, 1972.

Zelden, Charles L. *The Battle for the Black Ballot: Smith v. Allwright and the Defeat of the Texas All-White Primary*. Lawrence, Ka.: University Press of Kansas, 2004.

———. *Thurgood Marshall: Race, Rights, and the Struggle for a More Perfect Union*. New York: Routledge, 2013.

Zipf, Karin L. "In Defense of the Nation: Syphilis, North Carolina's 'Girl Problem,' and World War I." *The North Carolina Historical Review* 89, no. 3 (2012): 276–300.

Zoch, Nelson. "Whatever Happened to HPD Academy Class #7." *The Retired Badge: Official Publication of the Houston Police Retired Officers Association*, May 7, 2015.